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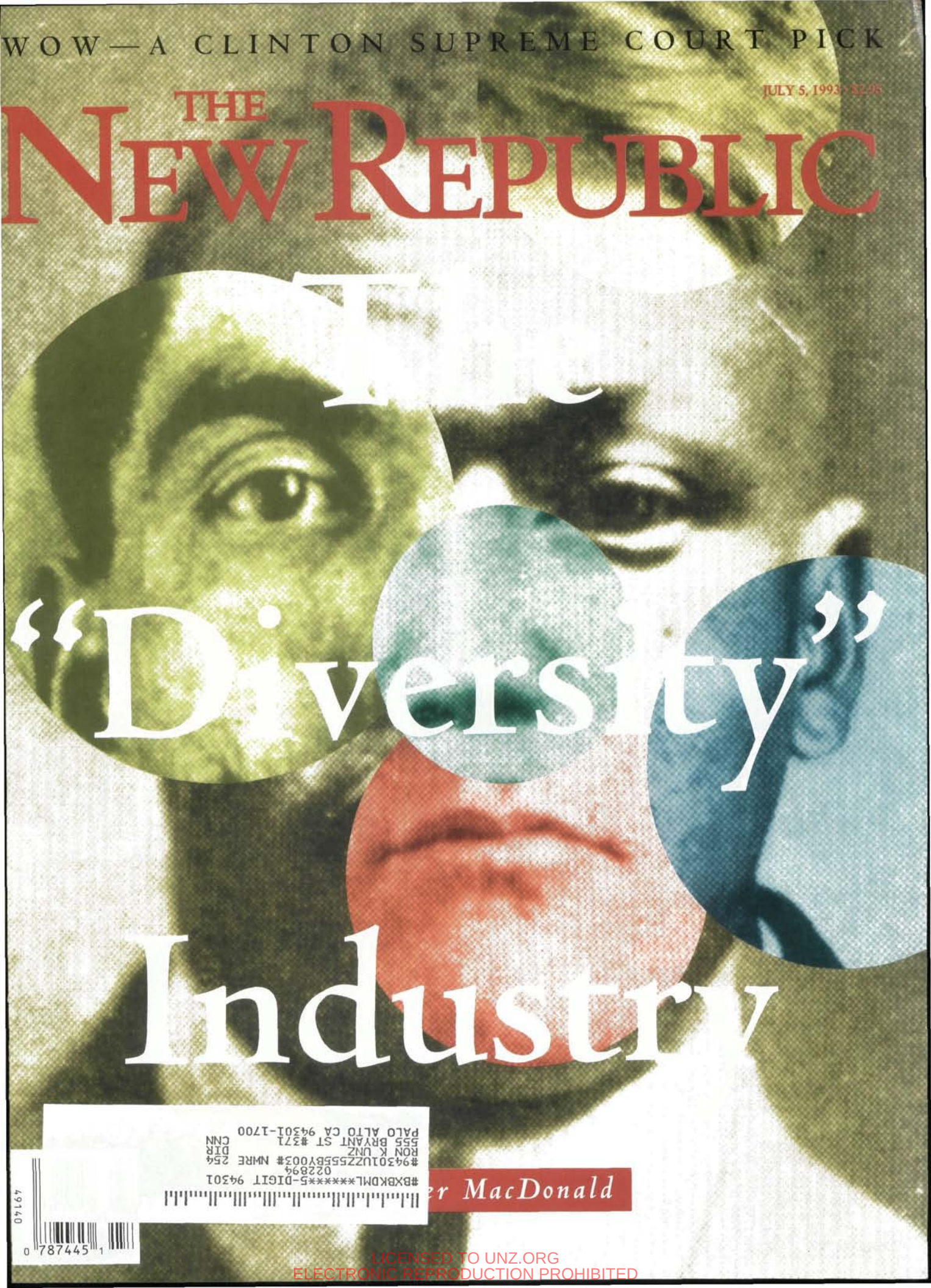

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Two Kinds of Equity

It's easy to see why the U.S. is having so much trouble solving its education problem. Other industrialized democracies try to educate youngsters to the maximum of their potential. You would think that would be our goal, too. But is it?

Goals 2000, the Clinton administration's education bill, aims to move America toward the successful systems of other advanced industrialized democracies. Since education in the U.S. is state and local, rather than national, this will need to be done differently here. But this bill proposes to have the federal government encourage the development of a system in which there are clear and high standards for students (comparable to those in other countries); assessments based on these standards; and, eventually, clear consequences for success and failure so that students have the incentive to work hard and achieve because they know that something important—like a high school diploma, college entrance or access to a good job—is at stake.

There is little doubt in the debate over Goals 2000 that this kind of systemic reform would get all or almost all students to do better. No one is saying that demanding from our youngsters what other countries demand would get any of them to perform worse than they do now. What, then, is the problem? Why is the legislation faced with all kinds of amendments that would cripple the reforms?

A clue can be found in a recent headline in *Education Week* (June 2, 1993): "The Rhetoric of High Academic Standards: Some Fear Movement Will Leave Disabled, L. E. P. [Limited English Proficient] Students Behind." So some oppose the legislation because they think it would help most (but not all) students or that even if it helped all students, it would help some more than others. To state it bluntly, they would rather continue in the present state of mediocrity if the reforms result in some groups of youngsters surging ahead faster or farther than others so that the gap in achievement between students at the top and bottom increases.

Thus, for many Americans, the name of the game is not to help all achieve to their maximum, as other countries do, but to avoid increasing inequality of outcomes. This kind of thinking can only lead to educational disaster. Furthermore, it conflicts with the way we think about such issues in other areas.

Suppose we discovered a vaccine to cure AIDS or cancer. The vaccine cured half the victims, but for the other half it only prolonged life a bit.

Suppose, for example, that the economically poor family earns $5000 a year while the well-to-do earns $50,000. And suppose we could develop an economic game plan that (without inflation or other changes) would increase the earnings of the bottom family to $7500 and that of the top from $50,000 to $75,000. Would this be desirable? Many, myself included, would prefer to see the poor family get a larger increase, even if it meant the top family's getting a smaller one. But, if we had no other choice, how many would reject it on the basis that, even though everyone was better off, the gap between rich and poor would increase? How many who earned $5000 would refuse to go to $7500 because the plan would result in an even bigger increase for the wealthy?

Suppose education reform results in all students' doing better but high-achieving students' making much more progress than those at the bottom. Even though the gap between top and bottom would increase, those at the bottom would be much more employable than they are now. In fact, they could qualify for jobs that are now moving to other countries because our young people don't have the skills to do them. Most people would find this a big step forward.

Or suppose we discovered a vaccine to cure some horrible disease...AIDS or cancer. The vaccine cured half the victims, but for the other half it only prolonged life a bit. Would it be fair to distribute a vaccine that rescued some but not others? Would we withhold it and wait until we found one that could cure all?

Suppose there are five children in your family. You, as a parent, can do something for three of them that will give them great advantages in life. But it won't work for the other two. Would you hesitate?

There's no doubt that a system of education that demands and expects more from all our kids will get more from all or almost all of them. No doubt some will move ahead faster than others. We should do more—much more—for those who start out behind, for those who need special help. But we must not apply a kind of reasoning to education that we would reject in every other sphere of life. We must not reject a system of excellence that brings us some inequality in favor of a more equal system in which all are mediocre.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1993 by Albert Shanker.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Guinier hit

To the editors:

Abigail Thernstrom's criticisms of Lani Guinier ("Guinier Miss," June 14) are targeted in part on Guinier's article "Second Proms and Second Primaries" (*Boston Review*, September/October 1992). According to Thernstrom, that article applauds separate senior proms for black high school students and, by analogy, "separatist political arenas" for black legislators. This is a complete distortion of Guinier's view—indeed a failure to understand the central point of her article.

"Second Proms and Second Primaries" begins by referring to the case of Chicago's Brother Rice High School. The black students at Brother Rice decided to hold a separate prom last year because the music for the high school prom—chosen by majority rule in a majority white high school—was not to their liking. According to Thernstrom, Guinier wants us to conclude that "black students in a white majority school need separate senior proms." That is exactly wrong. Guinier's actual point is that the "second prom" at Brother Rice could have been avoided if the music had been chosen by the cumulative voting scheme endorsed in Thernstrom's own article (and in TNR'S June 14 editorial, "Withdraw Guinier"). Guinier explains cumulative voting this way: "If there are five seats on the city council, then each voter gets to cast five votes; if there are thirty songs at the senior prom, then each senior gets thirty votes. But they may choose to express the intensity of their preferences by concentrating all of their votes on a single candidate or a single song." So if the black students at Brother Rice had been able to coordinate their votes—to put the same songs at the top of each of their lists—they could have gotten some of their music played, would not have felt left out and so would not have gone in for a second prom.

Guinier's article is, of course, not principally about proms; it is about the limits of majority rule, the problems with race-conscious districting as a remedy for illegal denials of voting rights and the virtues of cumulative voting. Guinier does not recommend racial division—not separate proms, and certainly not a "black separatist political arena." Instead, she condemns the terrible facts of racial division, exclusion and subordination; understands how those facts fuel separatist pressures; and proposes ways to redeem the democratic promise of "fair discussion among self-defined equals" in the face of those pressures. If Thernstrom has some alternative proposals about how to achieve these important aims, it would be nice to hear them, instead of her uncomprehending commentary on Guinier's own constructive efforts.

JOSHUA COHEN
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Franklin & Theodore

To the editors:

Jacob Weisberg ended his recent article on Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan ("Moynihan," June 7) by stating that Moynihan's analysis of himself is "the reverse of FDR, whom Oliver Wendell Holmes famously called 'a second-class mind but a first-class temperament.'" However, a minor historical dispute has arisen about whether Justice Holmes was actually referring to Theodore Roosevelt rather than to FDR.

It is not disputed that Holmes spoke words to this effect to his law clerk, Donald Hiss (brother of Alger), and to Thomas Corcoran after a visit by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Holmes's home on March 8, 1933. According to Geoffrey Ward in his book on Franklin Roosevelt, *A First-Class Temperament* (1989), after Roosevelt left, Holmes said to Hiss, "You know, his [cousin] Ted appointed me to the court." Hiss replied, "Yes, Mr. Justice." Holmes then said, "A second-class intellect. But a first-class temperament." Ward's opinion about the subject of Holmes's statement is obvious.

However, both Gary Aichele, in *Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.—Soldier, Scholar, Judge* (1989), and Judge Richard A. Posner, in *The Essential Holmes* (1992), point out that Holmes knew little about FDR in comparison to Theodore Roosevelt, with whom Holmes met socially on many occasions after Holmes's Supreme Court appointment by T.R. Thus, both authors take the view that Holmes was referring to T.R. Posner notes that "many letters" of Holmes make this point clear.

Both Holmes books quote an excerpt from Holmes's letter about T.R. to his friend Sir Frederick Pollock, written after T.R.'s death. In a letter dated February 9, 1921, Holmes said: "He was very likable, a big figure, a rather ordinary intellect, with extraordinary gifts, a shrewd and I think pretty unscrupulous politician. He played all his cards—if not more. RIP." Posner notes that Holmes's letter to Pollock may not have made the point about T.R. as "pithily" as it was made on March 8, 1933, but it was the same opinion.

Incidentally, at the end of the Pollock letter, Holmes wrote that he was "much pleased" with a review of his book, *Collected Legal Papers*, which appeared in THE NEW REPUBLIC on February 2, 1921.

JAMES A. PROZZI
Allison Park, Pennsylvania

Standard practice

To the editors:

In "Hate Story" (June 7), Ruth Shalit describes a false and ugly rumor regarding the scholarship of Charles Ogletree, an assistant professor at Harvard Law School who is African American. Shalit writes that "the pseudo-scandal [surrounding Professor Ogletree] has energized racial politics across the campus." In fact, it has done no such thing. The belief that Professor Ogletree has amply demonstrated remarkable talents that contribute significantly to the mission of Harvard Law School is supported by a broad and deep consensus of professorial opinion here. Moreover, as in all cases of promotion, we solicited the views of outstanding professors at other law schools regarding the quality of his work. Indeed, we took special care to bring in four experienced clinicians from other schools for an intensive on-site audit of the Criminal Justice Institute, the program that Ogletree founded and developed. We routinely seek outside opinion to reduce the risk that our judgment will be clouded by wishful thinking or ideological bias. On this score, too, there was a uniformly positive appraisal of Ogletree.

Shalit implies that the hiring and promotion of Ogletree have been facilitated by "a special resolution" that is a "loophole" that was created especially for him "on the occasion of his appointment" as assistant professor. This characterization is simply wrong. The resolution to which she refers is a general standard that was adopted after considerable debate, during the academic year preceding that in which Ogletree was offered an assistant professorship. It was one part of a package of resolutions submitted by our clinical education committee, and it applies to all clinical professorial appointments.

Though "Hate Story" suggests an ominous unfolding drama of faculty conflict, the real-life ending was considerably happier. The law school's tenured faculty has voted unanimously to promote Professor Ogletree.

ROBERT C. CLARK
Dean, Harvard Law School
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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To the editors:

At McGill University and most other serious academic institutions, publications that count most for tenure are not solicited by a friendly editor, but submitted to a neutral editor who removes all traces of authorship before submitting the manuscript to a panel of specialist referees. This editorial team will accept, return for revision or reject but *not* rewrite the paper reviewed. Tenure-getting articles do not appear in "house journals," and are authoritative enough (after publication) to be cited by other academics. Articles that matter are analytic and general rather than descriptive or personal. Good articles contain more fact than opinion, and they are written by the putative author and not a team of editors. Tenure candidates at major universities are generally expected to have published one or more such high-quality papers every year during their probationary period. There is no evidence in Ruth Shalit's article that Professor Ogletree has established an account of such caliber.

TOM VELK
Montreal, Canada

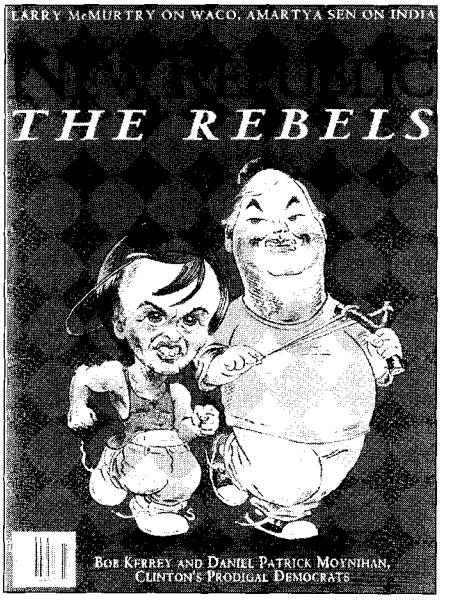
Guns and poses

To the editors:

As a fellow Texan, I must take issue with Larry McMurtry's assertion that possession of automatic weapons is an offense considered no more serious than "spitting on the sidewalk" ("Return to Waco," June 7). As someone who makes a living at criminal defense, take it from me: it *is* a serious offense here in the Panhandle, across the state of Texas as well as across the nation. Just a mere thirty days ago, two law enforcement officials from a small Panhandle town were sentenced by a federal district judge to harsh prison terms for just such an offense. Let's get this straight: the majority of Texans are not wild-eyed, knee-jerk gun nuts. We are getting fed up with the proliferation of these weapons and the misery they create. McMurtry's prose sounds good, but it's simply not accurate.

However, I am more concerned with the article's failure to analyze the underlying anarchy of the Branch Davidians, implicit in the author's excuses for David Koresh's excesses. All of McMurtry's talk of faith and levels of belief rings hollow when faced with the uncontroverted evidence of the vast arsenal these people amassed. What is the point of these weapons? No wonder an arrest and search warrant were issued. It is still illegal to possess these weapons. The process of law should have taken over at this point. For high-paid lawyers and other apologists to argue with sincerity that the Branch Davidians' conduct was justified because they felt the warrants were "invalid" is absolutely crazy. It reeks of intellectual dishonesty. If the ATF's actions were illegal and the warrants no good, the place to hash out these disputes was the courtroom. You don't debate the merits of search and seizure at the end of a gun barrel. Contrary to popular sentiment, the Koresh tragedy is not a lesson in religious intolerance. It is an example of our growing infidelity to due process, imperfect as it may be. It appears that Koresh and his followers had no shortage of lawyers. They should have been put to real work instead of pandering before cameras.

WARREN L. CLARK
Amarillo, Texas


LARRY McMURTRY ON WACO, AMARTYA SEN ON INDIA
THE REBELS
BOB KERREY AND DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, CLINTON'S PRODIGAL DEMOCRATS

Gays bashing

To the editors:

I'd like to lend my support to the views expressed in the May 17 Notebook item that commented on the March on Washington mandating 50 percent minority quotas on its state committees (thereby allowing two white males out of its fourteen members). As a former board member of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation/New York (GLAAD/NY) who served as chair of that organization's media committee for four years, I can honestly say you don't know the half of it.

As the gay movement grows stronger and more visible, this disturbing undercurrent continues to take hold in the name of diversity and egalitarianism. Consider GLAAD, which is often viewed as a "moderate," mainstream organization. Under its national by-laws, each chapter sends two delegates to the GLAAD/USA steering committee. But for each chapter, one of the two delegates must be a person of color and one must be a woman. As a result, only if one delegate is a woman of color can the second delegate be a white male.

The fact that, in many cases, activists with the strongest backgrounds and technical expertise are thus barred from the steering committee is considered irrelevant, and challenges to the new orthodoxy are deemed "racist and sexist." At a GLAAD/NY retreat, I was denounced as "someone who thinks white men are the main victims of discrimination" simply for having raised the issue of gender and race quotas.

Ellen Carton, the executive director of GLAAD/NY, is proud of noting that her staff is both 75 percent people of color and 75 percent female (thus, her contribution to "diversity"). There are currently no white men on staff.

GLAAD, of course, is not alone, or even the worst example. According to San Francisco's *Bay Area Reporter*, Torie Osborn, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), blamed "straight white men" for backing the military's ban on gays—conveniently failing to acknowledge Colin Powell and other people of color as major players supporting the ban. This was followed by an NGLTF fund-raising letter (penned by Martina Navratilova) demanding that power be taken from "straight, white, Christian men"—apparently the sole root of evil in the world.

Much of this white male-bashing (and accompanying discrimination) was born in the extremes of academic feminism. Some commentators see in it a crude variant of neo-Marxism in which capitalists are replaced by white men as the oppressor "class."

Unfortunately, far too many still view P.C. as a conservative myth. But if the first post-Stonewall, pre-AIDS wave of the movement was undone by New Left Marxism (as many of my friends assure me it was), P.C. may ultimately undo our current progress.

It's not always comfortable to walk in Orwell's shoes, but thank you for taking the first steps.

STEPHEN H. MILLER
New York, New York

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Getting sleepy

I'm really too tired to write this column. To be honest, I'd rather be puttering around my house. I'm 41, yet my boss seems to expect me to work like a 25-year-old. This isn't how I'd imagined my life turning out. I mean, I've been working fairly steadily for about seventeen years. I just don't want to work so hard anymore. I need a vacation. Actually, I need more than a vacation.

There's a Trend here. I'm not such an unusual person. Recently, I received my college class's "Twentieth Anniversary Report" and began flipping through my classmates' self-descriptions. There they were, the unmistakable signs of revolutionary fatigue:

> "For the first time in my life, I want to slow things down...."
>
> "At present I am on semi-sabbatical.... I quit private practice in October of 1988 and have been scaling down professional activities ever since."
>
> "I am in the middle of an extended life change, which began in 1989. Joy and I spent three months in 1990 on sabbatical...."
>
> "After ten years in the computer software business I decided to get out of the fast lane.... Now, I'm theoretically working on a novel, getting in shape and leading a stress-free existence."
>
> "I resigned my partnership...."

These are alumni who bothered to send reports—a self-selected, typically sunny group given to boasting about their kids' soccer skills. The real burnout cases were presumably too exhausted to write in at all.

Nor will things be better in five years, at least if the Twenty-*fifth* Reunion Class Book of Yale University is any indication. If anything, the older Yalies are more flamboyantly enervated. For example:

> "As the commitment to achieve fades ... [the] forward momentum fueled by the desire to advance one's position has come slowly to a halt.... I am beginning to discover the beauty of and the satisfaction in standing still."

Of course, neither the class of '68 nor the class of '73 are the first middle-aged Americans to get tired. But we're baby boomers, and anything baby boomers do, no matter how predictable, seems to get dramatized in a way that colors the entire national culture. When boomers first began to take well-paying jobs there were anguished discussions about selling out. When they started having kids they made a huge to-do about the joys of parenting. Now that they're starting to poop out we can expect a fuss about that.

Since trends are susceptible to abuse, especially by magazine writers, it's important to be precise about this one. The phenomenon I'm talking about—let's call it Baby-Boomer Burnout (BBB)—is not the traditional "midlife crisis." A midlife crisis (there are plenty of them, too, in the college reunion books) implies some sort of anguished reassessment of one's life course. But even people quite happy with their life course often lose the energy needed to pursue it at anywhere near their previous pace. That's BBB.

Nor does BBB depend on the general tendency of Americans to work excessive hours, a tendency described in Juliet B. Schor's *The Overworked American* (though BBB does help explain why Schor's fairly sober volume became a best seller). Working hours may well have risen over the past two decades. And when wives as well as husbands work, the result is a time squeeze for young parents. Complaints about lack of time to "balance" work and family are repeated to the point of tedium in the reunion reports. In fact, as Gary Burtless of the Brookings Institution notes, Americans are retiring earlier—so if overall hours of labor have risen, the increase must be heavily concentrated in the 25- to 45-year-old age bracket.

All this undoubtedly aggravates the tendency of boomers to wilt. But it's not a necessary condition for BBB. Again, burning out is part of the natural human life cycle. What's different is that those doing the burning-out are now the most populous group in America—and that the economy doesn't seem prepared to handle them. Just when millions of boomers are yearning to find secure niches where they can slow down and coast for a while, those niches are disappearing. The nation's economy and its demography are heading in different directions.

What is supposed to happen, after all, when middle-aged fatigue sets in? In previous eras, the answer—especially for many white-collar workers—was that they were accommodated by large, paternalistic employers. If you went to work for IBM, or even GM, there was an implicit deal: You might work like mad in your 20s and 30s. The payoff was that in your 40s and 50s you could throttle back—in a full-time, full-pay position. You might be supervising the hard-working 20- and 30-year-olds. Or, even if you dropped out of the management race, you could be valued for your expertise (and go home at 5:00). As Harvard economists James Medoff and Richard Freeman pointed out in *What Do Unions Do?*, one of the things unions do, when they get the chance, is to enforce this deal. The deal even has an economic payoff, since older workers are more likely to share their knowledge with younger workers if they know the younger workers aren't then going to take their jobs.

The problem is that large, paternalistic organizations are becoming a smaller part of the economy. So are unions. As corporations get "lean," they can no longer offer anything like tenure to aging white-collar workers. Quite the contrary. Those who don't produce get pruned. Economist Paul Osterman notes that in 1979 about 57 percent of 45- to 60-year-old men had worked for their employers for more than ten years. Just nine years later, that figure had fallen to 51 percent. Even IBM is laying off older workers who probably thought they had lifetime jobs. In the new economy, it seems, everybody is expected to work like a 30-year-old. Those who can't keep up—well, to judge from the alumni reports, they wind up trying to start consulting firms out of their basements.

This isn't a "crisis." The market will adjust to whatever mix of workers' skills and desires is out there. But that will involve changes. Younger workers may start demanding higher pay to go along with their long hours (since employers can't promise to take care of them later on). Middle-aged workers may wind up trading away income for job tenure. Nothing terribly wrong with this—except that the baby boomers, as is often the case, get screwed at both ends. They made relatively low wages when they were young, and now they may wind up making relatively low wages when they are old.

The more profound effects will be cultural. Not only are there a lot of baby boomers, but BBB will be concentrated in the precise class of boomers (white-collar professionals) who both generate and consume cultural products. Before boomer writers and moviemakers collapse completely, expect to see the emergence of burnout lit and cinema fatigué. I would also invest heavily in high-quality gardening-equipment stocks.

There are other vitally significant ramifications, of course. But I'm not up to figuring them all out. Take it away, *Newsweek*. I'm going to lie down for a bit.

MICKEY KAUS

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JULY 5, 1993

WISE CHOICE

We were apprehensive when President Clinton announced his criteria for assessing Supreme Court candidates: "Find me somebody who when the name is heard people say, 'Yes. Wow. A home run.'" The appointment of a justice is an occasion more of intellectual than political importance; and since World War II, the leading judges and scholars have been too little known outside the legal community to generate much popular excitement. Perhaps for that reason, presidents since FDR have all but abandoned the tradition of picking the best candidates, relying instead on cronies, ideologues or benign obscurities.

With the nomination of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, however, Clinton has broken the mold. And perhaps we can be forgiven for scarcely containing our enthusiasm. It was TNR's early endorsement that helped bring Ginsburg's merits to the White House's attention, at a time when most liberals were dismissing her for her politically incorrect views on *Roe* v. *Wade*. Fortunately, after the longest search in memory, the logic of her appointment became clear to the president himself.

For this Clinton deserves unstinting credit. There is something blinkered about Washington's obsession with the selection *process*, as if the process can somehow be separated from the candidate it produces. Of course, we would have preferred a quicker decision, free of near misses like Mario Cuomo. But these unfortunate diversions will soon be forgotten. When the president settled down to make his decision, he did something neither of his immediate Republican predecessors had done. He chose between two federal judges—Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer—who can be described without irony as the country's most scholarly Democrats, the best regarded by liberals *and* conservatives. While Ronald Reagan and George Bush talked cynically about separating law from politics, Clinton proved that he actually meant it. Not since Gerald Ford picked John Paul Stevens has a president taken his constitutional stewardship so seriously.

And not since well before Stevens has an appointment been so clearly right. Ginsburg is, as we noted months ago, the Thurgood Marshall of the women's movement. She is a civil libertarian and a scholar who combines intellectual independence with personal integrity. But her most important quality, the one that sets her apart from her pragmatic predecessor, Byron White, is this: she appears to have a constitutional philosophy.

There is something amusing about the profiles that have portrayed Ginsburg as a schoolmarmish technocrat. For her philosophical vision is rooted in the equal protection clause. She argued, years before it was fashionable, that the Fourteenth Amendment is a more plausible home for abortion rights than the ill-defined right to privacy. As for the argument that her temperament is ill-suited to coalition-building, the conservative justices need a good mental fight more than they need consensus. And if anyone can provide a counterweight to Antonin Scalia, it is his favorite liberal, Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Predictions about judicial performance are hazardous. Frankfurter turned out to be more influential as a journalist than as a constitutional theorist. But Ginsburg comes to the Court with the instincts of her greatest predecessors: political liberalism and judicial conservatism. Her conservatism, like theirs, reflects not mindless deference but a willingness to be restrained by constitutional text, history and structure. It remains to be seen whether she can transcend the precedents that have guided her until now. If she is able to project her vision of equal protection in ways that go beyond case-by-case balancing, she will become a great justice, rather than what she already is: a great judge.

Bill Clinton, the first president to have taught constitutional law since Woodrow Wilson, has come through in the pinch. Even if the deficit soars, the health care package flops and the voters turn him out after one term, he can be proud of this sterling decision. In Ruth Bader Ginsburg, he has chosen a justice who has the potential to bring everlasting honor to his name. •

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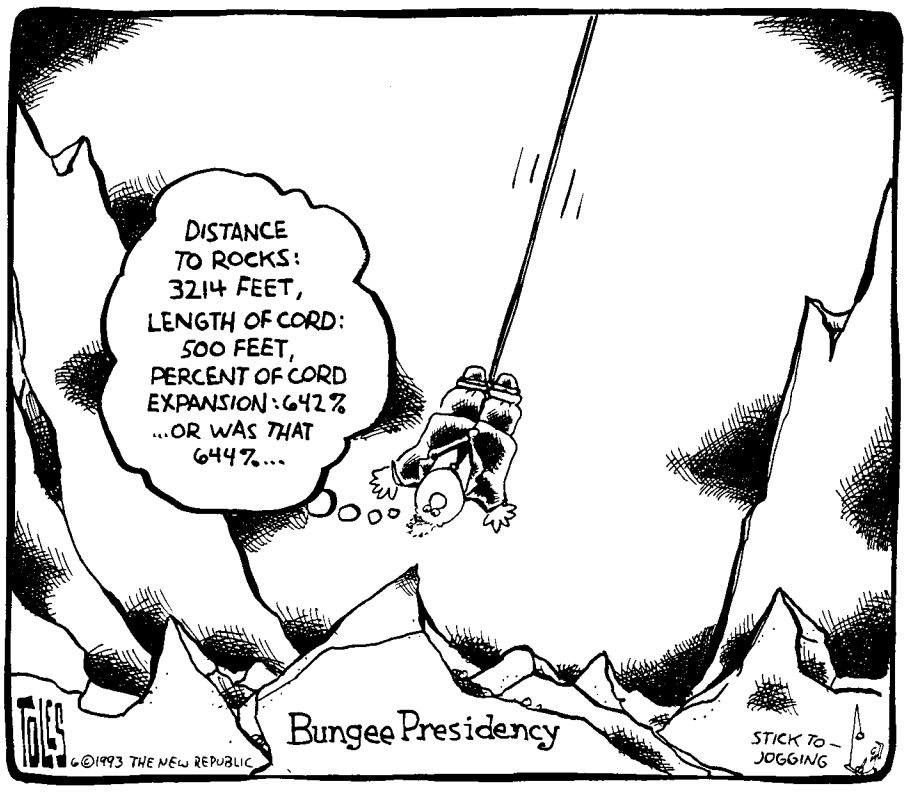
NOTEBOOK

GERGENISM IN ACTION: "As Mr. Gergen stood by beaming," *The New York Times* reported on June 16, "Mr. Clinton strode into the briefing room with a smile and quickly set out to redress Monday's tensions. After making a brief opening statement, he turned to Brit Hume, the ABC news correspondent whom he had snapped at the day before, and suggested that he owed him a follow-up to the question Mr. Hume had asked in the Rose Garden. 'You know what I'm really upset about?' he asked Mr. Hume, who was recently married. 'You got a honeymoon and I didn't.' In the general laughter that followed the President's joke, Mr. Gergen turned to Dee Dee Myers and was heard whispering, 'That was perfect.'" Perot probably thinks so, too.


DISTANCE TO ROCKS: 3214 FEET, LENGTH OF CORD: 500 FEET, PERCENT OF CORD EXPANSION: 642% ...OR WAS THAT 644%...
Bungee Presidency
TOLES ©1993 THE NEW REPUBLIC
STICK TO JOGGING

RUNNING DOWN THE RUNNERS-UP: "It is not enough that I succeed," Gore Vidal once said, in a characteristic expression of largeness of heart, "others must fail." This appears to be the Clinton administration's feeling about the appointments process. Those lists have become high-stakes crap shoots, governmental exercises in double or nothing. Stephen Breyer is only the last in a line of gifted and public-spirited men and women who lost the prize but won public humiliation, which in his case was mild. Is it the indecisiveness of the president or the incompetence of his staff that is responsible for all these walking wounded?

BANGKOK AND BULL STORY: At the global human rights conference that opened last week in Vienna, thirty-four Arab and Asian governments issued the Bangkok Declaration, an alternative to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Drafted by Iran in April, the declaration opposes the use of human rights by Western nations "as an instrument of political pressures," and promotes "cultural relativism" as the yardstick to measure violations. But not for all cultures. Many of the countries that signed the Bangkok Declaration are also members of the Organization of Islamic Countries. The same month the Bangkok Declaration was drafted, the OIC passed its early resolution requesting intervention by the United Nations Security Council and the United States to halt human rights abuses by Serbia and Israel. Some cultures, it appears, are more relative than others.

DON'T FLY SOUTH: The Supreme Court's unanimous decision last week that the city of Hialeah, Florida, can't prohibit members of the Santeria faith from ritually sacrificing chickens was welcome, and not only because we predicted it (see "Blood Ritual," TNR, November 2, 1992). Those who feared that the justices would not recognize discrimination against religious minorities if it leapt up and bit them have been proved wrong. But the most encouraging performance of all was David Souter's concurring opinion. In his courtly, soft-spoken way, Souter meticulously savaged Antonin Scalia's infamous peyote opinion, *Employment Division* v. *Smith*, which said that states are free to suppress religious freedom as long as they do so indirectly rather than explicitly. Scalia's opinion, Souter demonstrated, is blatantly inconsistent with the precedents on which it claimed to rely. With the addition of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, there will be a real chance of cleanly overturning *Smith* at last. But by swiftly passing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Congress can beat the Court to the punch.

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING: The chart in the article "J-School Confidential" (April 19) originally appeared in *Search Strategies in Mass Communication* by Jean Ward and Kathleen Hansen (copyright Longman Publishing Group). •

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THE FLAPJACK FILE

AIR JUSTICE

By Douglas G. McGrath

Sunday, May 30, 1993

When Agent Searle and I came on duty, we found Flapjack in the Oval Office, hysterical over the poll numbers, which show him to be the most unpopular president at this point in his term in history. He was crying and doing shots of Redi-Whip whipped cream from the can. No one else was there. Mr. Steph was at the Teen Beat convention, where he won the "Too Cute To Be True" award. (While 74 percent of the girls thought Marky Mark had a "hotter chest," 87 percent thought Mr. Steph would be "more fun at a dance and better at remembering birthdays.") The president's other senior advisers were out back playing beer pong.

Flap tried to pull it together. He wiped his eyes and said, "Hi, Agent Duke. How was your weekend, your wife's trip to Williamsburg and your second son Alex's Little League game? Any improvement in his batting average of .205?" He took a watermelon out of a drawer and started in on that. "Agent Searle, how's the rust problem on your Thunderbird and your wife's tooth trouble?" Before we could answer his voice broke and he said, "I feel their pain. Your son may lose his game, your wife may lose her molar and I may lose my job. My father deserted me, now my party's doing the same thing. People in the press, always playing gotcha, say I can't make up my mind on issues. That's not true! I often make up my mind ten different ways on a single issue!" He chugged a Mountain Dew and sighed. "I've got to put a stop to this unpopularity of me." He decided to hire the person who made the Reagan White House run so well.

Wednesday, June 2

Mrs. Reagan declined Flap's offer of chief of staff. She felt that with all the focus on containing hairdressing costs, the timing was wrong. So he hired David Gergen, who, as Agent Askin pointed out, is unlikely to run up many hair-based expenses.

Mr. Gergen said that the two most urgent problems are the lax way nominees are screened for positions and the hostile way the press has been treated. He took two steps. First he launched Operation Suck-Up, in which the White House will cravenly court the press. This began with Chelsea inviting Diane Sawyer for a sleep-over.

Then Mr. Gergen studied the old vetting form, drawn up by Mr. McLarty, which was used in the Zoe Baird and Lani Guinier nominations. It read: "Question #1. Do you believe in a place called Hope? #2: Do you ever stop thinkin' about tomorrow? #3. Have you ever killed a man? #4: Anything else we should know?"

Mr. G found this "a tad porous." Here's his form:

> Hi! Welcome to the Rodham-Clinton White House! You are being considered for: an eminent judicial position; or a high-ranking government post where you could help shape the post-cold war world and/or arrange sleeping accommodations for people you've always wanted to meet from Hollywood. We need your help! If you have any questions, please call senior White House officials Chip, Biff, Jimbo, Jessie or Cracker. We're here from 7 in the morning until 7 in the morning. If we can't be reached in our offices, ask the White House operators to check the lacrosse fields.
>
> *Illegal aliens. (Check one)*
>
> a) I have never hired an illegal alien.
>
> b) I hired an illegal alien, but only in my heart.
>
> c) I have never hired illegal aliens, but I have rented *Aliens* from the video store. I did not pay Sigourney Weaver's Social Security, but I will do so now.
>
> *Bonus questions:* Have you ever hired an illegal alien who had his/her hair cut by Christophe? Have you ever hired an illegal alien who has written for law journals in which he/she called for a minority veto over majority votes? Have you ever smoked pot? Have you ever hired an illegal alien to smoke pot for you?
>
> If you saw a high government official who had a slight Southern accent, gray hair and a boyish way of biting his lip, and he was having sex with someone like, let's just say, Sharon Stone, would you be able to keep that to yourself? Have you ever been a member of the Branch Davidians? Are you a damn lesbian?
>
> *I will never say the following phrases: (Check as many as appropriate)*
>
> a) I may disagree with you, Mr. President, but it's not like I'm leading demonstrations against the United States on foreign soil!
>
> b) But, sir, in the campaign you promised to . . .
>
> c) Let me check that with the president, Mrs. Clinton.

Wednesday, June 9

Mr. Gergen's Operation Suck-Up going nicely. Chelsea showed Helen Thomas how teasing her hair could give it a fuller look, while Flap's mother gave Peter Jennings tips on a dog race. Flap himself gave Dan Rather a rubdown. He wanted to do Connie Chung, but the Rod said no.

Sunday, June 13

Flap watched the Bulls-Suns game but kept thinking about the Supreme Court. "People are going to yell at me no matter whom I pick. I want someone who will make people say, 'Wow!' Should it be Breyer?" Just then, everyone said, "Wow!" Flap looked up and saw Michael Jordan make a basket. "Hey, what about Michael Jordan?" Flap said. "Everybody loves him! Talk about 'Wow!' *Air Justice!* David, call him now."

I followed Mr. Gergen out. He just stood outside the door winding his watch. When we came back in he said, "Michael said no. But he said he thought Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an excellent jurist who would make people say, 'Wow!'" That was good enough for Flap.

"Nice work," I heard Mr. Steph whisper. Mr. G shrugged modestly. "I know how to handle children," he said. "Don't forget, I used to work for Reagan."

DOUGLAS G. MCGRATH is a New York writer.

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MASERU POSTCARD

LIGHTNING STRIKES

By Richard Stengel

Lesotho, the Kingdom in the Sky, is a mountainous country about the size of Maryland completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Bordered by the flat and conservative Free State to the north and the green and violent Natal to the south, Lesotho is a poky, sleepy place, the only nation in the world entirely 1,500 meters above sea level. The Basotho people boast that their country leads the world in per capita deaths from lightning strikes. But the kingdom has another claim to fame: it recently held one of the most successful democratic elections in African history. Last March 72 percent of the country's 750,000 registered voters went to the polls and quietly gave the Basotho Congress Party an overwhelming majority in the new parliament. In fact, it won every seat.

African elections tend to be about the past rather than the future, and in electing the BCP Lesotho voters remedied an old injustice. In 1970 the BCP, led by its present leader, Ntsu Mokhekle, routed the ruling Basotho National Party. But Mokhekle never took office; Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan suspended the constitution and declared a state of emergency. Jonathan led an increasingly repressive state until he was deposed in a 1986 military coup. Mokhekle spent nearly two decades in exile elsewhere in Africa, forming an underground military wing of the BCP. He returned when the military government, after years of promises, finally scheduled national elections and the voters bestowed on the now frail leader precisely what he had won twenty-three years before.

Since the election, the new government has moved gingerly. In fact, it was said that Mokhekle's inauguration in April was postponed for more than a month because he first had to placate the military. But the fairy-tale election is not translating into a story-book transition. In traditional African fashion, the winners and losers are now engaged in an edgy feud. The BNP and its leader, Chief Evaristus Sekhanyana, have bruited about charges of fraud. In order to see how the country was faring after the election, I drove from South Africa to Maseru, Lesotho's capital.

Coming from the sere, monotonous platteland of the Free State, Lesotho rises up with a magical, Oz-like quality. Great mesas dominate the skyline, and the valleys, even in winter, remain green and fertile. While South Africa is a mixture of First World and Third, Lesotho is all Third and no First. Dusty herd boys mind skinny cattle. Men in battered fedoras and blankets ride by on sure-footed Basotho ponies. Girls carrying bundles of sticks walk merrily along the road and yell at passing motorists, "Money or sweets! Money or sweets!"

Maseru itself is an uneasy blend of sturdy nineteenth-century sandstone buildings and gimcrack Third World "moderne" architecture. The sidewalks are filled with hawkers selling vegetables and trinkets and women in blankets roasting cobs of corn on makeshift fires. (Blankets are the national costume; everyone wears one.) Minibus taxis lurch in both directions, tooting their horns to attract customers.

On the outskirts of the city, just across the street from the bunkerlike U.S. Embassy, are the BNP headquarters, located in Chief Sekhanyana's grand and whimsical brick palace. Sekhanyana had been finance minister for Jonathan and for the subsequent military council, and he is reputed to be prodigiously corrupt. When I arrived, lackeys in leather coats escorted me to a drawing room where he entertains visitors. With its red velvet upholstered doors, its red velvet Louis IV chaises, its sinuous red velvet curtains, the room reminds one of 1920s New Orleans cathouse design. Sekhanyana, who was resting on the chaise, is an enormously fat man, eerily round, like a bowling ball. His plump, slippered feet did not reach the ground, and his speech was as rotund and elaborate as his figure. For the next two hours I barely said a word as he unfolded a rococo monologue about the unfairness of the election. The theme of his talk was actually quite specific: the ballot paper.

"I tell you, the original paper was beautiful, the most beautiful paper I have ever seen. It was not coarse. It was not grainy. It folded easily. Yes, it was beautiful, but it was not the paper we voted on! The paper we voted on was hard, like cardboard, very difficult to fold. The black pencils we were given would not write on it. I suspect also that it was photosensitive. I swear that if Dr. Mokhekle has the least little bit of Christianity in him, let him say he voted on that paper!" His theory was that the BCP substituted its own doctored paper for the original ballot paper, which was manufactured in Denmark, and that the BCP paper was made in such a way that an X scratched in the BNP box would somehow migrate to the BCP box.

After an hour, I grew too weary to ask any questions. It was only when the smell of a spicy lamb stew drifted into the room, signaling that lunch was ready, that Sekhanyana rose from the chaise to bid me goodbye. "Those are my impressions," he said, reaching for my hand. "That is the long. That is the short. All I know is, something wrong has gone amiss." And with that he bowed slightly and moseyed off into the dining room.

In order to hear the BCP's side, I went in search of Monyane Moleleki, the new minister of natural resources, who acts as a kind of unofficial government

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spokesman. The minister had left early for the day, but his too-dutiful secretary phoned him at home and he reappeared in his office fifteen minutes later, dressed in a fashionable black-and-white checked suit.

Moleleki is a dashing fellow, slim, with flashing eyes and a goatee. He is in his early 40s and has a quick laugh. A protégé of Mokhekle, he went into exile when he was a young man, studying in the Soviet Union for seven years. ("I speak Russian with a Moscow accent," he says proudly. "Even Brezhnev didn't have a Moscow accent.") Moleleki has only scorn for Sekhanyana. Sekhanyana "owes banks in this country over $1 million.... The man is corruption itself! Election fraud? This is ridiculous nonsense. There were 130 observers from thirty-seven nations that said the election was fair. The BNP claim that a vote for them would turn into a vote for the BCP. Balderdash! What was it, magic paper from Denmark?" He chuckled at this.

Moleleki turned serious when talking about the present situation. That Lesotho is now an *elected* one-party state concerns the BCP: even if the government is not authoritarian, it runs the risk of appearing to be. The BCP has invited the BNP into the Council of State, which is a kind of appointed Senate, but so far the opposition has rebuffed it. He emphasized that the most important task of the new government was reconciliation. "We can't be seen to victimize the military and the civil service, even though they are against us," he said. His party favors a mixed economy, veering more toward the free market. I asked him whether Lesotho would want to be part of a greater *new* South Africa. He was not keen.

It was dark when I bid Moleleki goodbye. In the '70s and early '80s, before the homelands were allowed to construct casinos, Lesotho was the place white South Africans came to sin and gamble. I wandered over to the casino at the Lesotho Sun hotel. Inside, I found few if any South Africans but a swarm of Taiwanese businessmen. For the past few years the Taiwanese have been building factories in Lesotho, paying low wages for long hours. They are regarded by the Basotho as the new Boers, gruff, rude, condescending. I asked a Taiwanese fellow who managed a textile factory if any of his clothes were produced for the local market. "No," he told me between spins of the roulette wheel, "K-Mart."

As I was walking out of the hotel, I bumped into Moleleki, who was now dressed in a track suit and had his arm around his wife. He introduced me and accused me of keeping him late at the office, discussing politics. I asked him if he had tried his luck at the tables. "No," he said, glancing around at a group of well-lubricated Taiwanese businessmen, "politics in Africa is already too much of a gamble."

RICHARD STENGEL is the author of *January Sun: One Day, Three Lives, A South African Town* (Simon and Schuster).

Mary Matalin, vindicated.

TRUE FAX

By Jacob Weisberg

During the campaign, liberals held it as an article of faith that George Bush's minions were spreading lies about Bill Clinton, his record and his plans. After all, hadn't they done it to Michael Dukakis in 1988 with Willie Horton and the rest? "In 1988, [Bush] used a picture of a waste dump elsewhere to illustrate a television ad about Boston Harbor," Anthony Lewis wrote in an October 30 *New York Times* column. "This time the false advertising has been wholesale."

The lightning rod for much of the criticism this time around was Mary Matalin, who sent reporters daily fax assaults from Bush-Quayle headquarters in Washington. The "daily distortion," as the Bushies called it with unintended irony, was an adolescent exercise in rhetorical overkill. One August broadside was headlined: "Snivelling hypocritical Democrats: Stand up and be counted—On second thought, shut up and sit down!" Many of the releases focused on inconsistencies in Clinton's draft story; an October 5 release titled "Back in the USSR" attempted an ugly smear about Clinton's student travels in the Communist bloc ("Six weeks after he helped organize a massive anti-war protest in London ... Clinton turned up in the Soviet Union for a visit in the dead of winter"). Matalin was deemed a worthy heir to her late mentor Lee Atwater. But now, six months into the new administration, it turns out that a number of her predictions have been borne out. At least nine of the daily distortions have become quotidian reality.

Take the Bush-Quayle news release of September 27, "Clintonomics: An 'F' in Tax Math, Tax Honesty." According to the fax, "To get the full $150 billion in new taxes, Clinton would have to hit people making $36,600 a year. And to fund all of his promises, he would have to reach into middle-class pockets even deeper than that." The claim was simple: that Clinton's promise to tax only people earning more than $200,000 didn't match up with the amount he needed to raise. After President Bush repeated the assertion that the tax would hit the middle class, George Stephanopoulos said the charge was simply "a lie," insisting Clinton's plan would affect only the wealthiest. In fact, Clinton's top rate kicks in at $115,000 for individuals. His proposed, now fading BTU tax would hit families well below $36,600, as would energy tax alternatives currently being discussed. Health care taxes are likely to strike even lower.

Another Matalin arrow hit its mark on October 27. It

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questioned Clinton's claim—advanced in *Putting People First*—that preventing tax avoidance by foreign companies doing business in the United States would raise $45 billion over four years. Bush officials said $1 billion was a better estimate of what Clinton stood to gain from the idea. Another Republican complaint was that Clinton was dreaming if he thought "management reform" at the Resolution Trust Corporation would save $17.1 billion over four years. According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, additional revenues from foreign companies are forecast at $5.5 billion over four years. And according to the Congressional Budget Office, RTC management reform contributes nothing at all to deficit reduction.

The Bushies also tried to zero in on how far Clinton's deficit reduction plan really would go. Matalin's September 22 release, "The Real Debate: Clinton vs. Clinton," criticized the Democratic nominee for saying both that he would present a plan to balance the budget in five years and that he would cut the deficit in half within four years. The deficit this year is now estimated to be $302 billion. Without action, the CBO projects it will rise to $323 billion in 1997. Clinton proposes to cut it to $206 billion in 1997. That's some $40 billion shy of his more conservative promise.

The same Bush-Quayle press release attacked Clinton for waffling on a middle-class tax cut—trotting it out, then backing away from it. In an October 1 response, Stephanopoulos spelled out the exact size of the proposed breaks: $600 per year for someone with an income of $58,000 and two kids. "The absolute worst case would be a smaller middle-class tax cut," he asserted. The middle-class tax cut disappeared over the Bermuda Triangle after the election. In an October 21 release, "Truth and Taxes," Matalin suggested that Clinton might make upper-income seniors pay more for Medicare and Social Security. Clinton vehemently denied the charge. But under Clinton's economic plan, oldsters with incomes of more than $25,000 will pay tax on 85 percent of their benefits. Increased Medicare premiums are also supposed to generate $11.6 billion over four years.

In October the Bush campaign began to run regional radio commercials asserting Clinton would institute energy taxes and arguing they would drive up energy bills and cost jobs. These ads, which claimed utility bills stood to rise an average of $350 a year in Maine, Michigan and Maryland, were based on Al Gore's advocacy of a carbon tax and Clinton's assertion that polluters should pay for the damage they do. Howard Kurtz, who critiqued campaign ads for *The Washington Post*, lambasted the Bush spots for focusing on energy taxes, "although the Clinton campaign has never made such a proposal." Kurtz quoted Ricki Seidman, a Clinton campaign official, who called the ads "inaccurate, misleading and cynical." Anthony Lewis chimed in that "Governor Clinton has not advocated any such tax." According to Citizens for Tax Justice, a liberal group, the BTU tax Clinton originally proposed would cost a family $296 in Maine, $275 in Maryland and $265 in Michigan.

Republican press releases on social and foreign policy now look strangely prescient as well. On July 31 Matalin charged that though Clinton had promised to "end welfare as we know it," his platform called for nothing new. And indeed, there was no money for welfare reform in Clinton's February proposals. Matalin's foreign policy assault focused on Clinton's ambiguous position on Bosnia. On August 17 her release asked "Can Bill Clinton manage a Foreign Policy Crisis? Don't Make us Laugh." It claimed Clinton couldn't make up his mind about whether to lift the United Nations arms embargo in the Balkans. In an October 1 release the Bush campaign hit him again for vagueness on whether he would use force against Serbia. Nine months later Clinton has yet to make up his mind about lifting the U.N. embargo or air strikes.

None of the Republican predictions has proved entirely false. Some, however, still hang in the balance. The Bushies said Clinton would increase automobile fuel efficiency, or CAFE standards, at a cost of tens of thousands of jobs to the auto industry. It hasn't happened yet. And Clinton has not yet instituted a 7 percent to 9 percent payroll tax, which is what the Republicans said it would take to start to pay for his health care reform. (*Putting People First* suggests it will cost nothing.) But according to reports from the health care task force, payroll taxes are very much on the table.

Many, if not all, of Clinton's reversals of position are quite defensible. Cutting taxes on the middle class, or anybody else, would have been the height of irresponsibility, given a growing deficit. The BTU tax was a good idea, while it lived. And taxing Social Security benefits and increasing Medicare premiums for upper-income seniors is a relatively painless way to raise revenue without reducing incomes for those who live from government check to government check. It may be that the only way for Bill Clinton could get elected president was to be less than candid about his fiscal plans, as George Bush certainly was in 1988 and again in 1992. But next time around, let's not assume that it's the Republicans, and only the Republicans, who will say anything to get elected. •

ON THE HILL

BORED ROOM

By Stephen Rodrick

As Representative Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts gavels to order the House subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance, a yawning C-SPAN cameraman uncoils his cable and slowly trains his camera on the chairman. Lobbyists, newsletter reporters and committee staffers settle into their seats, some strategically folding their *New York*

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Times to conceal the crossword puzzle. The tedium in Room 2123 of the Rayburn House office building is nearly audible as the audience steels itself for hours of testimony on telephone privacy, toll record access and customer propriety network information.

"We must make sure Ma Bell doesn't become Big Brother," Markey grumbles into his microphone. Around him, gray microphones, empty nameplate holders and sweating water pitchers sit forlorn and unused. Only four of the subcommittee's twenty-five members have bothered to show up. They and their staffers crowd around the chairman to make it appear on camera as though the hearing is packed.

The testimony begins. Journalist Gregory J. Millman, like the eight other witnesses, reads almost verbatim from a prepared statement. He recounts how his telephone records were acquired, how his sources won't talk to him, how he isn't sure if his phone is still being monitored. Just as he seems to be wrapping up, Representative Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky returns from a half-hour absence. She sits down and begins to question Millman: Has this hampered your ability to report? Do you assume this is still going on? Millman repeats his statement. The audience winces. Markey smiles wanly and trudges on. The hearing continues for another hour.

This scene is typical of the congressional hearings that take place day after day on Capitol Hill. Theoretically a forum for building a frank public record on the pros and cons of public policy, hearings have become little more than token political gestures. In fact, so skewed are they to the whims of the committee chairmen that any balanced discussion of a topic is purely accidental. For example, of the thirty-seven witnesses who testified before Senator Sam Nunn's Armed Services Committee on the issue of gays in the military, twenty-seven were, like the senator himself, in favor of an outright ban on homosexuals.

Yet congressional hearings continue to proliferate. In the past sixteen years, the House of Representatives alone has held 54,034 hearings, spewing forth more than 4 million pages of testimony. No wonder the Senate and House last year employed 3,400 committee staffers—ostensibly hired to assist in the drafting of legislation—and commanded an annual committee budget of more than $103 million. Much of that sum goes toward salaries for the staffers who organize the hearings. Some of it goes for air fare, food and lodging for the witnesses who are brought in to read screened and scripted testimony in support of the chairman's stand.

Since members of Congress know what's going to be said, they rarely show up; perhaps a quarter of the subcommittee members attended the hearings I witnessed. And when they do come—usually when C-SPAN is taping—their behavior betrays the real story. Members catch up on missed meals, unread papers and unanswered correspondence. Perhaps in an effort to keep awake, Representative Joe Kennedy devours a seemingly endless supply of M&Ms and Diet Cokes brought to him by staffers. To fend off starvation, former Representative Larry Smith of Florida, recently indicted for tax evasion, drank staffer-delivered Slim-Fast shakes. John Dingell, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, is renowned for reading the paper, looking up only to gavel in another witness. Occasionally committee members make dull stabs at humor to alleviate the monotony. After Bush budget director Richard Darman made his famous remark that the deficit was like "The Cookie Monster," Senator Peter Domenici donned a hand puppet of the furry creature and began to ask Darman questions in the muppet's voice. No one laughed except the lobbyists. Then again, they're paid to laugh.

They're also paid to endure stupefying, synapse-warping boredom. "If you appear in the morning on the first panel then you know that they like you," says Robert McIntyre, who heads Citizens for Tax Justice. "Later in the day, members get bored and drift off to other obligations, and that's where you're likely to be placed if the members are less favorable to your views." Says one lobbyist for a small business trade association: "You get there early to get a seat, 7:30 a.m. for a 10 a.m. Ways & Means hearing, get a pile of testimony, start underlining, listen to the witnesses read their testimony verbatim and try to make some visual contact with the congressman. At $300 an hour I still don't enjoy it."

Still want to testify, even if you aren't paid to do so? The Senate Appropriations Committee allows "legitimate organizations" to testify about the budget process. Alas, you must sign up for your turn between 7 and 8 in the morning, and then times are assigned seemingly at random. Your non-profit organization is allotted two minutes and is likely to be shoe-horned in between NASA, EPA and the powerful National Association of Home Builders. Guess when everyone goes to the bathroom?

Of course, it's the heads of federal agencies who waste the most time trudging to and from Capitol Hill and languishing in committee hearing rooms instead of taking care of government business (not to mention the hours they devote to *preparing* for Capitol Hill audiences). Congressional Budget Office Director Robert Reischauer holds the record for last year, testifying nineteen times. He was followed by Fed chairman Alan Greenspan (fourteen times) and General Accounting Office head Charles Bowsher (thirteen visits). "You can't refuse," said a senior agency official from the Bush administration. "If you do, then in next year's budget your slice of the pie mysteriously gets smaller."

What's more, members of Congress can call hearings on any hot issue, even if it has nothing at all to do with their committee's jurisdiction. "Some years we have a pool to see what committee will hold a hearing with the most tenuous connection to the committee's business," a longtime House staffer says. The House Committee on Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, with its hearing on "Increased Drug Abuse: The Impact on the Nation's Emergency Rooms," probably takes this year's prize. When I asked staff director Ron Stroman why his subcommittee would be holding hearings on the subject, he cited the House rules: "The Committee on Government Operations shall review and study . . . the operation of Government activities at all levels with a way to

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determining their economy and efficiency." Then he added, "We had the governmental official that produces the statistics on the number of drug addicts appearing at hospitals to question him whether or not his office is functioning as well as it should." But Stroman is merely an artful practitioner of a long and storied tradition. Senator Arlen Specter once held a hearing on Josef Mengele under the auspices of the juvenile subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Celebrities, no matter how witless, can also confer importance on hearings. Richard Gere foreshadowed his Oscar night plea for everyone to think good thoughts about Tibet with testimony before a congressional committee on the subject in 1988. Noted '70s hippy dip John Denver once sang "Ode to Alaskan Forests" before the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, doubtless enhancing members' knowledge of clear-cutting. Specter brought in porno stars Linda "Deep Throat" Lovelace, Seka and Veronica Vera, who testified "I am the love toy, the object of your desires, exposed and vulnerable," for a steamy debate on pornography. Perhaps to shore up his image as a family man, Specter shortly after called on Captain Kangaroo to testify on violence on television (see "Media Specter," TNR, September 30, 1985).

To be sure, hearings have always been a stage for congressional tomfoolery. In 1837 Representative Balie Peyton threatened to shoot a witness whose testimony he didn't agree with. Still, some steps can be taken to make them more worthwhile. Select commissions in England, Japan and Sweden have brought together civil servants, legislators and interest groups to resolve public policy questions. A similar approach worked here, most notably in the guise of physicist Richard Feynman's inquiry into the *Challenger* disaster. Unfortunately, such measures are unlikely to have much long-term success, as Congress seems reluctant to cede power to groups it can't control. Similarly, roundtable discussions were suggested by the Congressional Research Service and even tried by the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development. "It really fostered some more constructive conversation," says a former committee staffer. But "the members didn't like it because they had to be better prepared and it was much harder for them to leave when they wanted to."

One way to improve the hearing process would be through teleconferencing. We'd get better witnesses (many of the best experts won't waste their time coming to Washington) and save money on transportation. "All they need is to add another satellite dish at a cost of about $5,000 and pay the transmission fees, which is much cheaper than flying people in from L.A.," says Steve Rabinowitz, director of media planning at the White House and an expert in satellite technology. In fact, back in 1977 Senator Adlai Stevenson suggested the use of teleconferencing "as a way of opening hearings up to all of America." Not surprisingly, no action has been taken. They haven't even scheduled a hearing.

STEPHEN RODRICK is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

COURT WATCH

BAD THOUGHTS

By Jeffrey Rosen

In every Supreme Court term, there is at least one case that tests, and vividly exposes, the character of the justices. Last year it was abortion; this year it is hate crimes. The outcome of *Wisconsin* v. *Mitchell*—which upheld a law that requires harsher sentences for criminals who "intentionally select" their victims "because of race, religion" and the like—was never really in doubt. But instead of being sensitive to the intricate First Amendment concerns that the case raised, William Rehnquist dismissed them contemptuously. His unanimous opinion reads like a lazy summary of the government's brief: polemical, self-assured and profoundly superficial. The fact that none of the justices wrote a separate concurrence suggests that none of them is concerned about policing the boundary between speech and conduct with analytical precision.

Civil libertarians are familiar with the powerful policy arguments against hate crimes laws, which increase the punishment for behavior that is already criminal. But the constitutional arguments are far more complicated. A less cavalier opinion could have endorsed something like the ACLU's position: carefully drafted sentence enhancement laws, like Wisconsin's, may be constitutional. But sloppily drafted laws, like the one proposed by Representative Charles Schumer, which would ratchet up the sentences for crimes "in which the defendant's conduct was motivated by hatred, bias or prejudice," are unconstitutional. (See "Crime and Punishment," TNR, October 12, 1992.) A comparison of the Wisconsin law, which the ACLU supports, and the Schumer bill, which it properly opposes, shows the importance of the distinctions that Rehnquist ignored.

The most important distinction is that the Wisconsin law does not *formally* require judges in hate crimes cases to determine whether the offender was motivated by bigoted thoughts. The Wisconsin law's language is identical to the wording of many federal civil rights statutes, such as the section of the U.S. Code that imposes penalties on any person who, by "threat of force," interferes with the constitutional rights of another person "because of his race, color, religion or national origin." And you can be prosecuted under the Wisconsin law—and the civil rights laws—even if you never utter a hateful word. One way of proving that a criminal selected his victims on the basis of race, for example, would be to introduce evidence that he attacked black people on different occasions and in different cities.

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In the *Mitchell* case, the defendant's racial attitudes are hard to discern and are ultimately irrelevant. A group of black teenagers in Kenosha, Wisconsin, were discussing *Mississippi Burning* in 1989. "Do you all feel hyped up to get some white people?" asked Todd Mitchell, 19. "You want to fuck somebody up? There goes a white boy; go get him." As Mitchell stood in a parking lot, eight of his friends ran across the street to beat and rob Gregory Riddick, a 14-year-old white boy. Aside from the words he used to point out Riddick—and Rehnquist failed to note this—Mitchell did not participate in the beating. Rehnquist also ignored testimony that Mitchell yelled, "You should leave that boy alone," as soon as his friends began to charge; and that he then called the police and said he was sorry for what he had done. But under the Wisconsin law, it does not matter whether Mitchell was motivated by racism, or by peer pressure, or by a desire to steal Riddick's tennis shoes. Whatever his motive, he is liable for selecting his victim on the basis of race.

Rehnquist's opinion clashes, in important ways, with the 1992 cross burning case, *RAV* v. *St. Paul.* By ignoring the key language in *RAV*—"special hostility toward the particular biases thus singled out . . . is precisely what the First Amendment forbids"—Rehnquist misses the most convincing way of distinguishing the two cases. Unlike the Schumer bill, and unlike most hate speech laws, the Wisconsin scheme is not, on its face, an attempt to suppress politically incorrect ideas. As Clarence Thomas emphasized at the oral argument, you can be convicted under the Wisconsin law for intraracial as well as interracial violence. A black separatist who assaults a group of black attorneys for selling out would be no less liable than a white Klansman who assaults an African American out of racism.

Nadine Strossen of the ACLU points to a final difference between the Wisconsin law and the Schumer bill. In Wisconsin the defendant's discriminatory intentions must be proved beyond a reasonable doubt. The Schumer bill, by contrast, contains no such requirement; and evidence of the defendant's bigoted thoughts—such as the fact that a neighbor heard he had a copy of *Mein Kampf* on the bookshelf—can be admitted even if it is only tangentially related to the underlying crime. For the same reason, the ACLU has properly opposed Florida's law providing for an enhanced penalty if the crime "evidences prejudice."

If Rehnquist had focused narrowly on the formal neutrality of the Wisconsin law, in short, he could have upheld it in a way that distinguished it from laws that explicitly target bigotry. Instead, he was expansive. He invited legislatures to punish what he called "good" motivations more severely than "bad" ones; and in the process, he exacerbated First Amendment concerns rather than minimizing them. As Susan Gellman of the Ohio Public Defender's Office notes, if a state can increase the punishment for motivations it finds especially abhorrent, such as racism, then it can also decrease the punishment for motivations it finds less abhorrent, such as homophobia or opposition to abortion.

Rehnquist dismissed the First Amendment concerns in two laconic paragraphs. Treason, he noted, can depend on proving the defendant's bad motive; and in a 1947 case, the Court allowed the government to introduce evidence of conversations that had taken place long before an indictment for treason because they cast light on the defendant's Nazi sympathies. Rehnquist's enthusiasm for a cold war treason opinion is startlingly insensitive. It slights what the Court had called, in an earlier case, "the concern uppermost in the framers' minds, that mere mental attitudes or expression should not be treason." And by going out of his way to compare hate crimes to treason, Rehnquist wrongly encourages the focus on politically unpopular views.

In the same spirit, Rehnquist belittles the real danger that the Wisconsin law—which increases the punishment for virtually every offense in the Wisconsin criminal code, from trespassing to adultery—can be applied in unconstitutional ways. "It is difficult," he writes sarcastically, "to conceive of a situation" where a minor misdemeanor, such as negligent operation of a motor vehicle, would be racially motivated. But other unconstitutional applications are not so difficult to conceive. The Wisconsin law threatens up to five years in jail for anyone who has sex with a married person "because of race," for example, bringing a ban on adultery perilously close to a ban on miscegenation. It creates a brand-new crime of group libel by increasing the punishment for race-based defamation. It would also require stiffer penalties for pro-choice protesters who trespass on the front lawn of a church "because of religion." Even the ACLU emphasizes that these cases raise "serious constitutional problems."

Rehnquist also fails to acknowledge the powerful incentives to turn hate crimes trials into ideological witch-hunts, even when the language of the statutes is formally neutral. In Mitchell's case, the only evidence of his racial attitudes was the discussion about *Mississippi Burning*, which was not strictly necessary to prove that he selected his victim on the basis of race. But in other cases, defendants are encouraged to argue that their apparently racist conduct was not motivated by bigotry. A white man indicted under Ohio's similarly worded hate crimes law, for example, tried to prove he was not a bigot by emphasizing his "associations" with black friends and neighbors. This prompted the following remarkable cross-examination: "And you lived next door to [Mrs. Ware, a 65-year-old black neighbor] and you don't even know her first name?" No. "Never had dinner with her?" No. "Never invited her to a picnic at your house?" No. "I want you to name just one [black] person who was a really good friend of yours . . . "

By slighting the danger that technically constitutional laws can be applied in unconstitutional ways, Rehnquist encourages legislatures to be similarly insensitive. As a result, the Anti Defamation League, whose model hate crimes statute has been followed in twenty-six states, no longer has an incentive to distinguish constitutional laws

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from clearly unconstitutional ones. "Before the *Mitchell* decision, we were planning to encourage states to follow the Wisconsin language. But the decision is so broad that I'm not sure we have to anymore," says Michael Lieberman, associate director of the ADL.

Why was no justice moved to write separately in this case? The charitable explanation is that all nine of them were so afraid of antagonizing their impatient and vindictive chief that they swallowed their doubts. The less charitable explanation is that no one cared enough about the delicate First Amendment issues to notice the distinctions that Rehnquist disparaged. •

Can Aristide come home now?

LOVE AND HAITI

By Amy Wilentz

Under Bill Clinton as well as George Bush, U.S. policy in Haiti has threatened without delivering. The Haitian generals, masters of bluff and bravado themselves, see this for what it is. Their interpretation: the United States *says* it wants to reinstate democratic rule, but it doesn't—not really. In the past few weeks, however, the intransigence of the Haitian military has been so embarrassing to the United States that the administration has been forced to make good on a few of its threats.

Two weeks ago, responding to the Haitian generals' retreat from the negotiating table, the United States finally revoked the visas and froze the assets of some of the leaders and backers of the 1991 coup against Jean Bertrand Aristide. Of course, since the Americans had threatened to do this for almost two years, there was not much left to freeze. The United States also agreed to support forthcoming U.N.-enforced petroleum and weapons sanctions against Haiti, after having closed its eyes to the leakiness of the OAS-sponsored trade embargo that is theoretically still in effect. Clinton put Marc Bazin, prime minister of the de facto regime, on his assets list, sending a signal that Bazin is no longer the Americans' pet pol. Once he lost his U.S. support, Bazin also lost his military backing and was forced to resign. Now that Haiti has no de facto president or prime minister, the regime is openly military.

Old institutional ties within Haiti are a big reason it took the United States so long to get serious. Since its nineteen-year occupation of Haiti, which began in 1915, the United States has had close links to Haiti's light-skinned elite, whom the Marine occupiers found more appealing than the country's blacker, poorer citizens. The occupation government ran customs, where its agents and officers worked with the elite business families of the *bord de mer*, which supervised exports. The Marines installed a succession of mulatto puppet presidents and developed a mulatto officer corps for what became the modern Haitian army. The military relationship remains strong. Generals Henry Namphy and Prosper Avril, two of Haiti's post-Duvalier dictators, were trained in the United States, as were Raoul Cedras, chief of staff under Aristide and leader of the coup against him, and Michel Francois, perhaps the most brutal of the anti-Aristide officers running the country.

In other words, the generals who led the coup against Aristide, and their business backers, had good reason to expect the United States not to push them too hard for Aristide's return. They knew the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Agency for International Development in Haiti harbored a deep antipathy to Aristide, whom the embassy had labeled "a radical firebrand" before he became a presidential candidate. Aristide was just the kind of leader—poor, country-bred, black—the Marines had fought in various anti-U.S. rebellions. He had no ties to the elite. He was out of the Port-au-Prince loop, and to be feared.

AID, on the other hand, was very much on the inside with Port-au-Prince society. The secretaries at the fancy AID office came from Haiti's best families. The embassy nurse, an American, was married to the scion of a wealthy elite clan, a man who participated in an abortive coup against Aristide even before the new president was inaugurated. Under the Aristide government, AID, which not surprisingly found itself in agreement with the elite's arguments against the new president's proposed labor improvements (such as raising the minimum wage to 50 cents an hour), allocated more than $26 million to programs supporting the "private sector," a nice name for Haiti's robber barons. Though Clinton's assets list is tough on the military, it almost completely omits the big families who financed the coup.

Things are bad in Haiti. Surprise. Since the coup, the Haitian government, which traditionally does next to nothing in terms of public service, has done actually nothing. Children are growing skinnier and skinnier, which in Haiti is hard to do. According to a study by the National Labor Committee (a coalition of twenty-three U.S. unions), the average Port-au-Prince worker—often employed in the factory of one of the ruling families that backed the coup—makes the equivalent of fourteen cents an hour to assemble toys, electronics and clothes for U.S. export. So much for the trade embargo. In the Port-au-Prince markets, a week's salary of $5.50 buys twelve plantains, four onions, four tomatoes, three cups of cornmeal, four bouillon cubes and a cup of sugar—not exactly enough for the five to seven people a Haitian worker usually supports.

The military, emboldened by Clinton's wavering, has attacked peasant groups in the countryside—despite the presence of some 150 foreign observers from the U.N. Mission Civile. Last month, when the generals stalled negotiations and Clinton did nothing, military

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violence erupted. In Hinche, where the post-coup military obliterated a peasant movement, the ten foreign observers who had been interviewing locals about repression found their offices suddenly empty. "Outside the mission's office, there is always an armed attaché standing there, watching," said one human rights worker. "It's not a very comfortable atmosphere to do business in." The observers, whose presence was supposed to reduce repression, are now being treated as objects of scorn. Soldiers have taken to beating their victims in full view of mission members.

No one knows how the elite and the military will react to an oil and arms embargo. Since so many American threats have been empty, they will doubtless wait to see if the sanctions are real—and effective—before they bend to the pressure. But an oil embargo seems to be the one instrument of international policy that might actually work, especially if the neighboring Dominican Republic complies. (U.S. threats to revoke its special sugar-trading relationship with the Dominicans might do the trick.) If oil supplies dried up, the army would no longer be able to project itself into places like Hinche. The provinces would be virtually uncontrollable. An embargo would also chop away at the elite's comfortable life. No oil would eventually mean no *delcos*, the Creole word for the private generators the wealthy use to shield themselves from Haiti's frequent blackouts. It would also mean that businesses that use generators during power outages would have to shut down during those hours. It would stop the private minibuses that bring hundreds of maids and houseboys and gardeners up from the slums to work for the wealthy. Finally, the embargo would prevent the linen-shirted bachelors, the high-heeled mistresses, the sleek matrons in their designer jeans, the long-fingered bankers and all the beautiful rich teenagers from driving their Mercedes and Volvos and smoke-windowed Mitsubishi Monteros around the high hill above Port-au-Prince.

An oil and arms embargo wouldn't necessarily compel the military and the elite to give in without further fighting. In fact, the prospect of a reinstated Aristide may prompt an attempt by the military to "clean up" the opposition before the exiled president comes back. If democracy is to return, they reason, let it return without roots. This is not to say we shouldn't support the embargo. If it works and the generals step down, a timetable will be set up to appoint a consensus prime minister, create a professional police force, reduce the size of the army and reorganize the judiciary. But first and foremost Aristide must be allowed to return. This is what Haitians are dying for, not necessarily because they love Aristide but because they understand what their first freely elected president represents: the chance not to starve, the chance to work and the possibility that their government might respect them, for once.

AMY WILENTZ is the author of *The Rainy Season: Haiti Since Duvalier* (Simon and Schuster).

The GOP lives.

RIGHT BACK

By Fred Barnes

President Clinton has done for Republicans what they couldn't do for themselves: he's united the party. He's also revived the conservative movement beyond its wildest dreams. Both Republicans and right-wingers are utterly amazed at their good fortune. "Bill Clinton's done more to unite Republicans in four months than I'll do in four years," gushes Republican National Committee Chairman Haley Barbour. "It's unbelievable," says Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council. "Clinton has tried to move on so many issues at once he's succeeded in reactivating the Reagan coalition." Conservative publicist Craig Shirley rhapsodizes, "We're coming out of the dark ages of Bush's presidency and into the age of enlightenment."

No one expected this sudden turnaround. After Clinton's economic address to Congress on February 17, Paul Weyrich of the Free Congress Foundation told allies, "Conservatives may be out of it for a long time." Former drug czar Bill Bennett says he worried "that Bill Clinton might succeed. That would be trouble for conservatives." Representative Bill Paxon of New York, chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, admits he didn't anticipate a GOP resurgence this soon. "I figured Clinton's policies would be bad, but I thought he'd be a better politician." Instead "his programs and policies play to us," insists Paxon. "There's never been a better time to run as a Republican."

Clinton has touched the hot button of every ilk of conservative—free market purists, social issue conservatives, right-to-lifers, anti-tax crusaders, the Christian right, deficit hawks. The result is an explosion of right-wing activism, coupled with a surge of support for Republican candidates and growing public support for some conservative positions. Practically every rightist group reports extraordinary success at fund-raising and recruitment of new members since Clinton's election. The National Rifle Association, for instance, has added 350,000 new members since the inauguration (total membership today is 3.2 million). Its annual budget has leapt from $60 million to $100 million. The Clinton-bashing *American Spectator* magazine has jumped in circulation from 114,000 in January to 176,000 in June.

More astonishing is the born-again experience of the American Conservative Union. Underfunded, the ACU had been a spent force for years. But since Senate Republican leader Bob Dole signed a fund-raising letter this spring, "we've been adding 6,000 contributors a day," says

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ACU Chairman David Keene. Membership has risen from 30,000 in October 1991 to 200,000 today. Except for Dole's signature, the ACU letter was standard conservative fare, raising alarm about "the coming liberal tidal wave." The only wrinkle was Clinton, lumped in with liberals. "Let's show Bill Clinton and his people in the media that conservatives are not divided, that our movement is not dead," Dole wrote. The letter worked, says Keene, because conservatives "have identified a new enemy. We used to have communism. Now we have Bill Clinton."

The Family Research Council, which champions conservative positions on social issues, has grown just as rapidly as the ACU. Pre-Clinton, "we used to average 5,000 pieces of mail per month," says Bauer, the FRC president. "Now we get 15,000 a month." Contributions have soared. By June 1 the council had raised as much in 1993—$4.5 million—as it did in all of 1992. "It's getting to the point where my biggest problem is managing the sudden increase in grass-roots activity. I'm gearing up a new office just to deal with correspondence."

Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has experienced similar growth. "It's incredible," says chairman Ralph Reed. "We've been averaging 10,000 new members a week since Clinton came in. We expect to be at 1 million dues-paying members by the end of the year." On June 14 alone, Christian Coalition headquarters in Virginia Beach, Virginia, received mail from more than 25,000 new members, Reed says. "Everything we do, we're seeing numbers growing dramatically." The coalition's two-day political action workshops were attended by 1,500 people in 1992. Already in 1993, 3,600 have attended.

Still another sign of the conservative revival was the response to Bennett's release of what he calls "The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators," which traces the rise and fall of the divorce rate, abortions, etc. Bennett spent thirty minutes talking it up on Rush Limbaugh's syndicated radio show in March, urging listeners to call the 800 number of the conservative Heritage Foundation for a copy. In six days Heritage got 75,000 calls. The names were checked against the foundation's own mailing list. The overlap was only 1.5 percent, suggesting most callers were drawn into the conservative network for the first time. Then Heritage sent a fund-raising letter to the callers. It got a phenomenal 10 percent rate of response, raising $140,000.

The surge in right-wing activity has palpably boosted the GOP. In races for the Senate in Texas and for mayor of Los Angeles, conservatives constituted a disproportionate share of the electorate. That wasn't the only reason for Republican victories. "You have the population going in one direction [conservative] and the Clinton administration in the other," argues Vin Weber, the former Republican congressman from Minnesota who now heads Jack Kemp's Empower America. "It's like a cold front meeting a warm front. There's a storm. The precipitation is Kay Bailey Hutchison, Richard Riordan, a Republican mayor of Jersey City, the rejection of tax increase proposals in Michigan and Montana." Hutchison beat interim Democratic Senator Bob Krueger in Texas by better than 2-to-1 on June 5. Three days later Riordan became the first Republican elected mayor of Los Angeles since 1957. Bret Schundler won 68 percent of the vote in Jersey City, a working-class town with a 65 percent minority population.

Hutchison waged a one-issue campaign, zinging Clinton for raising taxes instead of cutting spending to pare the deficit. Democrats downplay this and blame Krueger for campaigning ineptly. But his clumsiness doesn't explain the lofty 67 percent of the vote for Hutchison. Anti-Clintonism had to be a major factor. In Texas, L.A. and Jersey City, moderate Democrats and independents bolted and voted Republican. Riordan won 49 percent of the Jewish vote, more than twice the percentage Republicans normally get; Hutchison got 35 percent. "Bill Clinton won a lot of the cut taxes and cut spending vote in 1992," says David Carney, a honcho in the Hutchison campaign. "The small business guys, the high-tech entrepreneurs—they've all bailed out."

There was also a dog that didn't bark: the widely predicted rift in the GOP between the religious right and moderates didn't materialize. Why not? "It's not really a mega-clash," says Republican media consultant Mike Murphy. "The religious right likes all the normal Republican stuff." Christian activists "were willing to accept a Republican with whom they might disagree on a few issues," says Reed of the Christian Coalition. (Both Hutchison and Riordan are pro-choice.) "The level of cooperation and conciliation [between the two factions] far exceeded anyone's expectations. Now the challenge for the moderate element is whether they'll reciprocate." The test case is Virginia, where Mike Farris, backed by the Christian Coalition, is the Republican nominee for lieutenant governor. Reed says he expects moderates to support Farris. We'll see.

Given the Republican victories, it's not surprising that anecdotal and polling data show public opinion is running in a conservative direction. In the early days of Clinton's presidency, however, this wasn't clear. Speakers on the right-wing circuit were amazed when audiences cheered anti-Clinton barbs. To a bipartisan group in South Carolina last winter, Bauer declared: "Somebody needs to explain to this president that he was elected to deal with the economy, not to force the radical gay rights agenda on the American family." The crowd, Bauer says, "leaped to its feet and applauded." Bennett discovered audiences respond with thunderous approval to his criticism of a ponytailed man who asked at the presidential debate last October in Richmond, Virginia, how the candidates would meet his needs. "It would have been good if one of the candidates had said, 'Look, I'm not your father. I'm not your priest. I'm not your rabbi. Meet your own needs. Get hold of your life.'" Eight months after the debate, the line still works. Barbour discovered this line clicked with crowds: "We don't have a $300 billion deficit because we tax too little. It's because we spend too much." Now this is just standard GOP rhetoric.

Polling numbers offer more conclusive evidence. The conventional wisdom that voters are less tax resistant

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INTELLECTUALS AND RELIGION

Recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, among both professors and students, and amid inquisitive people generally, there is an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This interest is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious reawakening entail having any truck with Jimmy Swaggart's weird motel bills or Tammy Bakker's real-life impersonations of Imelda Marcos, or embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or America First. Nor does the religious renaissance imply a retreat from working for peace and justice. Rather, there is an awareness that, in the words of Jean Bethke Elshtain, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political commitments which are far more solid than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and the dangers of pseudo-scientific messianisms.

The New York Times Magazine article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this "return to religion," and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual fascination with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments which result in progressive social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Simone Weil, Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary riches offered by such greats as Ignazio Silone, Graham Greene, Thomas Merton, W.H. Auden, Flannery O'Connor, and T.S. Eliot.

An ecumenical and literary monthly edited by lay Catholics, we've been characterized by the University of Chicago's Martin E. Marty as "lively" and by *Newsweek* as "thoughtful and often cheeky." And there's no denying the *Library Journal*'s verdict that we will "doubtless command increasing attention."

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and more favorable to government intervention was never true, though Clinton and his advisers believed it. The network exit poll on election day found 55 percent of Americans favor fewer government services and lower taxes, while 36 percent want more services and higher taxes. Since then, the gap has widened. An ABC News poll conducted from February 25 to 28 showed 67 percent like smaller government and fewer services, and 30 percent favor the opposite. Republicans guessed if they vigorously opposed Clinton's tax increases long enough, the public would agree with them. And they guessed right. Approval of Clinton's handling of the economy has dipped from 58 percent in February and March to 31 percent now. Worse for Clinton, 56 percent of Americans think the country is seriously off on the wrong track. That's how they felt during the Bush era.

Sounds catastrophic for Democrats, doesn't it? Not necessarily. Republicanism today is defined chiefly as anti-Clintonism. And voters remain nearly as wary of the GOP as they were in 1992. Asked who is more serious about cutting the deficit, Clinton or congressional Republicans, voters side with the president, 47 percent to 33 percent. Are Republicans attacking Clintonomics for crassly political reasons? Sixty percent say yes. And if the Clinton presidency recovers, Republicans would be caught without a ripe target or a set of issues to fall back on. Republicans aren't identified with popular alternatives to Clinton's policies on education, crime or trade, says Bill Kristol, who was chief of staff to Vice President Quayle. "No Republican has the stomach to use the Guinier nomination to reopen the debate on quotas and the Voting Rights Act," he says. "The most discouraging thing to me," adds Republican consultant Jeffrey Bell, is that Republicans aren't advocating Reagan's policy of cutting both taxes and spending. "It's a proven program for economic and political success," he insists.

Republicans are optimistic about their prospects for gaining House and Senate seats in 1994. "Anti-Clintonism can take you through 1994, which will be a referendum on Clinton, not Republicans," says Kristol. "It doesn't take you through 1996. One reason is that Ross Perot can benefit as much from anti-Clintonism as Republicans can—and he is." The odd thing about the Republican resurgence is the absence of leaders. When the GOP rose in the late 1970s, it had Ronald Reagan. Now the loudest Republican voice belongs to Rush Limbaugh. "There is no political leader who can talk to 18 million people a week [as Limbaugh does]," says Michael Joyce, the influential conservative who runs the Bradley Foundation in Milwaukee. That leaves Perot with a lot of running room. "He's out there like the Republicans in the 1850s," says the ACU's Keene. "He's a threat to the whole system." But more to Republicans, whom he crowds out as Clinton's foil, than to Democrats. Republicans may fare no better in 1996 than 1992 unless they find a way to stymie Perot. Not an easy task. •

Cashing in on affirmative action.

THE DIVERSITY INDUSTRY

By Heather MacDonald

Affirmative action has spawned a multimillion-dollar business: "diversity management." In recent years hundreds of small firms and large corporations have hired "diversity" consultants to ease racial tensions and improve the "diversity profile" of their businesses. Through "diversity awareness" and "valuing differences" training, these consultants purport to teach firms how to "manage" employees hired under affirmative action programs, whose high attrition and low promotion rates have occasioned much hand-wringing in corporate boardrooms.

Supporters of the diversity industry have a simple explanation for the problems of minority retention and advancement: racism. Never mind the business world's widespread acceptance of affirmative action programs: affirmative action itself, it turns out, embodies racist assumptions. Bringing minorities into companies and training them to fit into the "value system of WASPs" merely puts them "at a disadvantage and sets them up to fail," explains Donna Gillotte, a diversity consultant based in Westport, Connecticut, whose clients have included General Foods, Avon and Pepsi. According to diversity boosters like Gillotte, it isn't the new minority employees who need training—it's the managers. And what managers need to be trained to do is "value differences."

The concept of "valuing differences" is the cornerstone of the managing diversity movement. It translates questions of competence into questions of culture. Proponents argue that "non-traditional" workers who fail to

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advance are not underqualified, just "differently" qualified. Ethnic, racial and sexual groups, the reasoning goes, each possess a unique management style that will enable businesses to succeed in the global marketplace. White male managers, however, label such different cultural styles "as negative or resistant behavior, for lack of a more accurate explanation," says Tom Nelson, vice president of education and training at U.S. Bancorp in Portland, Oregon. To tap their employees' valuable differences firms therefore must first abandon "white male" management practices and renounce their ethic of conformity and assimilation.

Diversity management is flourishing at the highest reaches of American business. American Airlines, Coca-Cola, Goodyear and Procter & Gamble, among others, are all engaged in one form or another. Indeed, *The New York Times* (which has itself gone to great lengths to diversify) reports that 40 percent of American companies have instituted some form of diversity training, a number that grows each year. Barbara R. Deane, editor of the industry newsletter *Cultural Diversity at Work*, estimates that approximately half of the Fortune 500 companies have "someone with some responsibility" for diversity. Diversity conferences are held weekly across the country, attracting hundreds of managers from business and government. The top business schools have added diversity programs.

ILLUSTRATION BY KAI ZIMMERMANN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Diversity consultants don't come cheap. Fees average $2,000 a day; the most sought-after consultants can fetch four to five times that amount. Diversity guru R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr. of the American Institute for Managing Diversity in Atlanta reportedly nets $8,000 a day; according to Deborah Raupp of UCLA, some trainers charge $10,000 a day. Many consultants won't even talk to a company unless it agrees to a long-term relationship. The stunningly successful Elsie Cross Associates, for example, whose clients include Eastman Kodak, American Express, G.E. Silicones, Corning Glass and Ortho Pharmaceutical, requires a five-year commitment from companies—at a total cost of more than $2.5 million.

Not surprisingly, the field is growing rapidly. "Many consultants are wiping the dust off their old [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission compliance] presentations and rushing to the marketplace with 'diversity' programs," said one respondent in a recent poll conducted by *Cultural Diversity at Work*. (Participants in the poll, titled "Diversity and Cross-Cultural Trainers: Do They Know What They're Doing?" concluded that 50 percent didn't.) Traditional business consulting firms, such as the international Towers Perrin, are adding "diversity" specializations; others, such as Diversitas, Inc. of New York City, are springing up specifically to capitalize on the demand for diversity training. "'Diversity' is the buzzword paying the rent of countless consultants," says Burke Stinson, a spokesman for AT&T, which has an active diversity program.

For the money, diversity consultants promise corporations that they will increase their profits by "empowering their whole work force," in the words of Kim Cromwell, corporate diversity programs manager at the Digital Equipment Corporation. But before a company can "fully utilize its diverse population," says Cromwell, it must remove existing obstacles to minority empowerment. By universal agreement among diversity advocates, the most important step a company can take to eliminate those obstacles is to commission a "culture audit." It is also one of the most expensive. According to Geoffrey Atkins, president of Diversitas, an audit can run from $30,000 to $100,000.

Through employee interviews and surveys, the auditor determines which of the firm's "cultural roots" are blocking the progress of its "non-traditional" employees, to use diversity jargon. One such cultural root that particularly offends diversity adherents is the widespread notion that "fairness equals treating people the same." Managing diversity proposes instead that

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"fairness equals treating people appropriately"—in other words, different standards for different groups. According to Ann Morrison, a leading diversity booster and director of the Center for Creative Leadership in La Jolla, California, minorities and whites cannot be evaluated under the same criteria, because minorities face a host of barriers from which whites are freed:

> Some executives have concluded that if non-traditional managers have more difficulty in performing an assignment, it must be because they are not as capable as their white male counterparts. But ... the "same" assignment given to a white male manager and a non-traditional manager is hardly the same at all.

Reliance on traditional job qualifications is also a suspect "cultural root." "'Qualifications' is a code word in the business world with very negative connotations," explains Andrea Cisco of Towers Perrin. If minorities do not meet existing employment criteria, then "corporations need to expand the definition of qualifications," says Alan Richter, creator of the board game called "Diversity Game," which is intended to educate managers about cultural differences. Adds Morrison: "The weight placed on math, science and engineering credentials may be considerably biased." Diversity consultants argue that expectations of literacy should be challenged as well. "We haven't started to ask what are expendable requirements, such as the two-page memo or a certain writing style," complains Thomas.

After the audit uncovers a company's "institutional racism," the next step toward managing diversity is eliminating these prejudices through "diversity awareness" or "valuing differences" training. Typically, a company will pack off its entire white-collar work force to multiday training sessions conducted either by its in-house diversity officers or by outside consultants. The sessions are billed by trainers as a "safe place" for employees to confront their racism. Corning's Education and Training Program is typical. Its mandatory "Phase I: Awareness" section includes two and a half days of racial sensitivity training and a day and a half of gender sensitivity training for all salaried employees. Corning claims its gender course will "increase awareness of gender issues at Corning and develop skills to address behavior change around gender issues." The course on race will "increase awareness of racial issues and demonstrate ways that by increasing the skills in managing diversity, participants will be able to prevent discrimination, determine when problems are due to racism and better utilize the resources of all individuals."

Graduates of Gender and Race Issues I at Corning move on to "Phase II: Skill Building (Focus on Racial Diversity)," a four-and-a-half-day course for supervisors of black employees "to increase awareness of how the climate, structure, reward systems and developmental opportunities in the [supervisors'] unit impact Black employees." In case those managers' awareness is not sufficiently heightened, Corning also offers a four-and-a-half-day training to its black employees in "how to diagnose their own race-related stress and understand how the organization may be contributing to it."

The philosophy of the awareness session is summed up in the popular "Valuing Diversity" video series by Griggs Productions, a video production company specializing in "cultural difference." The seven-part series has been purchased (at a cost of $3,000 to $4,500) by almost 5,000 business, government and educational organizations, including Kellogg Company, Lockheed, MCI, Yale University and the University of California, as well as the U.S. Departments of State, Justice, Labor, Transportation, Defense and Energy, among others. The tapes present simulated vignettes of biased situations in the workplace, in which female or minority workers are shunted aside or misunderstood by white, male colleagues. In one segment, an equal employment opportunity officer at U.S. West tells the camera: "As a white woman dealing with racism, the best I'll ever be is a recovering racist."

Diversity trainers use a variety of gimmicks to uncover prejudice. Trainees draw pictures, participate in role-playing exercises and interpret Rorschach-like images. In her training sessions, West Coast consultant LueRachelle Brim-Donahoe tapes five posters to a wall, each of which describes a cultural archetype, such as "light-complexioned black female factory line supervisor with GED" and "white homeless drug-addicted father living in a car with two small children." Trainees are instructed to sit under the poster and describe the person they would most like to be. Their choices, claims Brim-Donahoe, reveal the chooser's preconceived notions about various subgroups in society.

To drive their point home, diversity trainers sometimes make an example of one of the trainees: writing in the conservative political journal *Heterodoxy*, K. L. Billingsley describes a "sensitivity" session at the University of Cincinnati in which consultant Edwin J. Nichols ordered a female academic to stand up in front of her colleagues as an example of "the privileged white elite." Later in the session, he asked her to stand again. "We all know who the most beautiful woman in the room is," he said. "It's the woman with the three private [school] degrees and the blond hair and the blue eyes. Let's have her stand up so everybody can look at her. Look at the pearls she's wearing, her clothes, her shoes." This time the woman remained in her seat, sobbing.

Diversity trainers operate on the assumption that simulating narrow-mindedness proves the existence of the real thing. Consultant George Arteaga warms up his groups with the invitation: "Let's talk stereotypes." Participants dutifully furnish stereotypes of the Anglo-Saxon male, Jews, Asians, blacks and Hispanics. Participants in Elsie Cross Associates workshops prepare a skit containing examples of office racism and sexism. The trainer then divides the group into distinct "cultures" and encourages them to denounce each other. At a recent diversity conference for businesses in New York City, consultant Nancy R. Hamlin asked the audience to guess her marital status, the number and ages of her

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children, if any, the type and color of her car, her hobbies, her ethnicity and her religion. Though all of the answers were wrong, Hamlin informed the audience that it had just engaged in "stereotyping."

Of course, one five-day stretch of diversity awareness training alone is rarely enough to overcome employees' prejudices. The Digital Equipment Corporation has "empowered" a set of thirty to sixty employee "core groups" that meet on a monthly basis with a company facilitator to "break down stereotypes about difference," according to Cromwell. Many firms establish "diversity councils" to ensure that company policies meet diversity standards and to set "strategic diversity goals"—i.e., hiring and promotion quotas. Thomas recommends a five-year plan for managing diversity that calls for seven "re-education" programs, three "planning initiatives" and the appointment of four task forces and subcommittees.

The mandate that ultimately emerges from diversity training is contradictory. On one hand, managers learn that they must judge individual behavior as an expression of racial, sexual and cultural difference; on the other, they are told that they must not "base their behavior on how they think members of a particular cultural group will react." If this is too confusing, here is a simpler rule of thumb: it's fine to stereotype, as long as the stereotypes are of the right sort. According to Terry West, corporate media relations manager at Texas Instruments, minorities are "more nimble, entrepreneurial and innovative." Cle Jackson, former director of human services at Wang Laboratories, says that "blacks and Hispanics approach situations in a 'man-to-man' or 'feeling, caring' manner, whereas white males function primarily on a 'man-to-object' style based on power." Other "diversity approved" stereotypes are uncomfortably close, if not identical, to common sexism and bigotry. Shaunna Sowell, the environmental operations manager at Texas Instruments, enthuses that "women communicate to build relationships and understand the problem; men, to build power and authority within a hierarchy and to arrive at an immediate solution." Morrison reports approvingly a trainer's comment that blacks "react quickly to changing situations ... as evidence[d] [by] the so-called black style of 'hot dogging' in playing basketball or running a football."

Diversity advocates are not content with changing individual attitudes, however. According to Atkins, it is essential to "correct behavior" as well. To do that, "accountability tools" are needed. Xerox pioneered the most powerful accountability tool in 1984, when it linked managers' compensation to their achievement of the firm's highly detailed "diversity goals." Since then, many companies have followed suit, including Palmolive, Mead and Prudential Life Insurance. The compensation link is quite an effective motivator. Two major departments at Hughes Aircraft lost 10 percent of their bonus pay as a penalty for receiving bad "diversity report cards" after they failed to hire and promote the requisite number of minorities. The next year they headed the list for "behavior modification," having found people to hire whom they previously "had said didn't exist," according to Dave Barclay, vice president of work force diversity at Hughes.

Some measures for enforcing correct behavior are more draconian. At the New York law firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges, it is a violation of diversity policy to say that "persons of color are 'less qualified' or only in the firm because of 'affirmative action.'" Sanctions may include removal from committee chairmanships and termination. It may be an act of bias as well for a white partner to ask a black associate where he went to law school, or to talk to him about sports. Managing partner Ellen O'Doner acknowledges the concern that such rules will "chill normal interaction" but says that unregulated speech "can do more damage."

Despite the grand rhetoric of its advocates, there is little evidence that diversity management can solve the problems it purports to address. In fact, it may make them worse. As diversity programs proliferate across corporate America, group infighting has become a problem second only to "backlash" by white men. "More and more groups are going at each other," says Morrison. "The women's group vies with the black group for promotions."

Nor will converting the workplace into an arena for the practice of identity politics do much to improve competitiveness or help minorities advance in the business world, where a deficit of business skills, not a proliferation of racism, is the overwhelming reason many minorities fail to advance. Diversity managers address this gap by making race and ethnicity qualifications in their own right. But the resources spent maintaining the fiction of equal preparedness would be better used to assist minorities lacking the business skills to compete on merit alone.

Indeed, diversity adherents acknowledge that they are unable to document the advantages of diversity training or even describe what managing-diversity heaven would look like. Though Thomas, for example, presents himself as a hardheaded businessman, he admits that "it is difficult to talk about how [diversity management] plays out in operation." He suggests that it entails "mindset shifts," and offers a clarifying analogy: "If you have a jar of red jelly beans and add some pink and green ones, diversity is not the pink and green beans, but the resulting mixture."

The preferred solution to the problems of measurement and description is to declare them irrelevant and proceed on faith alone. "One of the problems corporations have with diversity is that they like things in boxes," says Gillotte. This, she says, reflects a misunderstanding of the nature of diversity management. It "is not a program," she explains, "but an evolutionary process that is very difficult to be specific about. It is not about getting from point A to point B."

In fact, one never *does* get to "point B." Gillotte says that "you need to work five or ten years before you can say you're into the diversity process. It never ends." And at two grand a day, there's no reason to think it will. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Killers

Every so often, when current film fare thins out, I rent a tape of *The Verdict* (1982) to refresh myself. The screenplay, about the comeback of a sodden Boston lawyer, is passable; but, in addition to Paul Newman's marvelous acting, I like to watch Sidney Lumet's direction, which lifts sheer, shining professionalism to a larger dimension.

Lumet almost reaches that level in his latest, **Guilty as Sin** (Hollywood). Larry Cohen's screenplay isn't as ambitious as *The Verdict*—it's only a smart thriller with some neat twists—but Lumet takes it thoroughly in hand, in gifted hands. It's particularly cheering after his last picture, a dud called *A Stranger Among Us*, to see Lumet working on a script that really revved him up.

Lumet is always intent on blending theatrical dimension with cinematic incisiveness. (Think of the Judith Malina street scenes in *Dog Day Afternoon*.) One sequence here epitomizes this. In an emptied courtroom after a trial, the defendant sits casually in the witness box. His lawyer, a woman, is far across the room. The scene begins with the space as a separating but uniting factor—theatrical. Then Lumet does what theater could not do: the woman approaches the box, and the scene ends with two immense profiles almost touching. The altering of space is made a dynamic in the scene.

But centrally, as in so many of his films, Lumet bases *Guilty as Sin* on acting—on his love of actors, his knowledge of their art, his gift of evoking something more than professionalism in them just as in himself. The picture, set in Chicago, concerns a handsome man who admittedly lives off women: he is on trial for the murder of his rich wife. He is defended by an attractive female lawyer whom he chose very carefully. If there had been shrug-and-nod acquiescent casting—say, Kelly McGillis and Jeff Daniels—the film's interest would have been mainly in the plot twists. But with his casting and guidance, Lumet goes much beyond that to make the people themselves interesting.

Don Johnson, as the defendant, shows again that he is richer than we expect. He is so attractive that, maimed as we are by movie-going experience, we expect little of him as an actor. But in *Born Yesterday* he had the ability to be teasingly quiet—and to summon thought and feeling from depths. Here he takes on a real chore: he plays a self-assured ladykiller, a role that could quickly fizzle or repel. In a few minutes we believe that he has the powers he claims and that it would be silly of him to pretend otherwise. Add to this the growing diabolism of the role—which must be credible, or goodbye film—and Johnson scores a clear triumph over triteness.

Rebecca De Mornay plays the lawyer and is dazzling. First, with the help of Andrzej Bartkowiak's expert camerawork, she has never looked more attractive, with a face that manages to be at once feline and frank. Then, as she did in *The Hand that Rocks the Cradle*, she confronts the fact that her character goes through familiar situations—guarded flirtation, the dawning of dangers, the complications resulting from them. In every moment, De Mornay seems to know very well the worn response she might have used, discards it, moves toward fresh, genuine response—human behavior instead of film pattern.

Together with Johnson—and of course with Lumet—De Mornay creates a film several degrees better than the one Cohen wrote, a film charged with sexual currents between the two that are never overt but that add, first, to the comedy and, later, to the dread.

As with almost all thrillers, the script becomes less and less logical as the pace picks up. Why would the meticulous plotter of the first parts of the film commit the blatant acts at the end? But decreasing credibility is the name of the thriller game, and this one plays the game entertainingly.

In the last few years several talented black and Hispanic directors have made their debuts; and some of those directors were little more than children. Matty Rich was 19 when *Straight Out of Brooklyn* appeared, so perhaps he was as much as 18 when the project started. Now comes **Menace II Society** (New Line), directed by Allen and Albert Hughes, who are 20. Thus they were in their teens when the film began, a film that had a budget of more than $2 million.

That's lunch money for a Schwarzenegger behemoth, but it's a sizable chunk with which to back two teenagers. They had done some music videos that apparently impressed the right people; among their talents must also be the

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Children of Fate. *Two interwoven documentaries about Sicilians, one made in 1961 and the other in 1991. Vivid permutations of character and circumstance. (Reviewed 5/14/93)* **Un Coeur en Hiver.** *The quiet drama of a man content to live an emotionally reticent life. His acquaintances, in the Paris music world, are quite different. (6/7/93)* **Much Ado About Nothing.** *Blessedly unforgettable. Kenneth Branagh directs himself and Emma Thompson in a production that, except for the four Americans, makes us rejoice. (5/10/93)* **The Music of Chance.** *The tone, cool yet violent, taciturn yet forceful, fits the Paul Auster novel it transmutes. Two men lose a poker game and pay off weirdly. (6/21/93)* **—SK**

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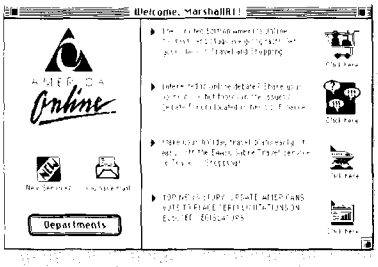

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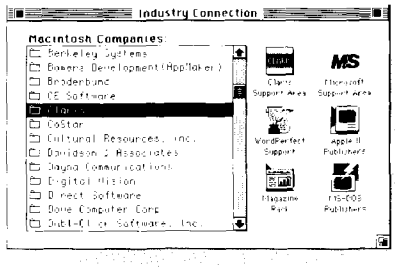

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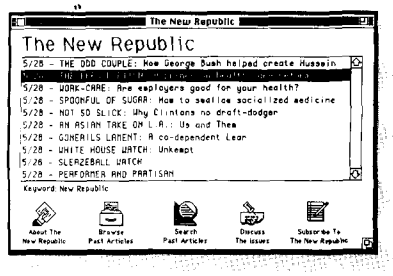
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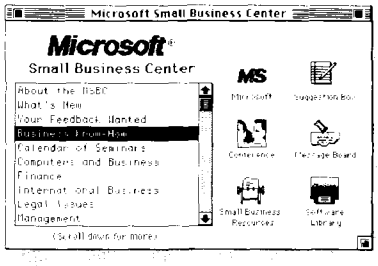

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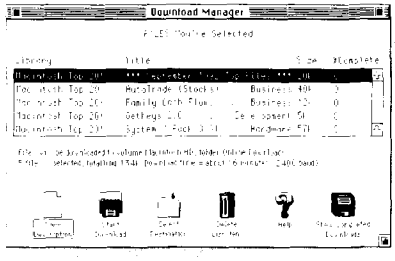

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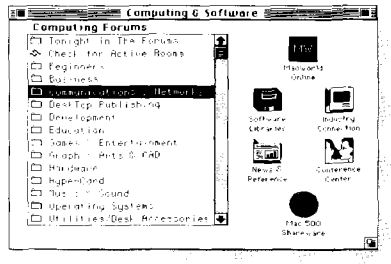

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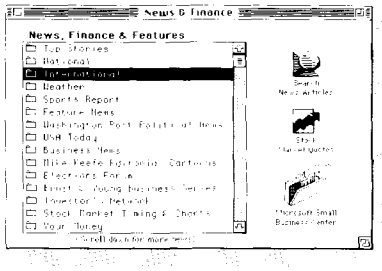

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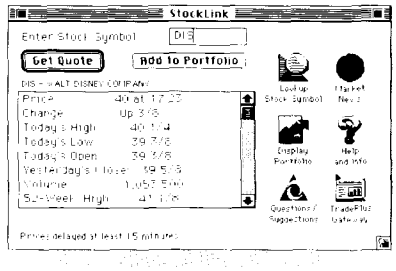

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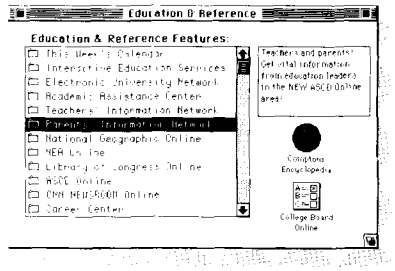

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ability to evoke confidence.

Their title, *Menace II Society*, plays with horror film sequel titles. But in one sense, the II, though it would kill the pun, should be a higher number: we've seen the materials often before. The protagonist, Caine (more word play), is a Watts teenager. We see him first as an accessory to the robbery and killing of two Korean shopkeepers; then he graduates from high school. The Hughes brothers exploit to the hilt the screenplay they evolved with Tyger Williams.

But that screenplay carries a grave risk, an old contradiction. Everything that happens—the drug dealing, the car jacking, the drive-by wipeouts—is factual: tomorrow's newspaper will confirm it. Still, all those matters are so familiar from past pictures that the very facts take on a tinge of falsity. Honesty needs more skill in its service than Williams has or else it takes on the feeling of cliché.

The Hughes brothers' directing compensates a good bit for the story's predictability. They can take us into a new place with a sweep of arrival. They can dissect an event—the opening crime, for instance—with multiple views that coalesce into a larger-than-life whole. They can make a scene rise to a blackout significantly. And they can induce their actors to improvise freely on the script's dialogue. (Every word couldn't possibly have been written down beforehand.)

That's an achievement with this cast because most of its members are unexceptional. Tyrin Turner, as Caine, is stolid, getting our interest more as a case than as a character. Jada Pinkett, as a young mother, has a mechanical part, but she doesn't do much to lubricate it. The only really lively performance comes from Laranz Tate as a psycho killer, and admittedly he has the liveliest part.

About the extreme violence in the film, the only thing to say is that it no longer seems extreme. Once again we see what a gun does for a hopeless male's ego and masculinity. Maleness kills, says the film, and is killed. The Hughes brothers' belief in this terrible trope gives their film terrible vigor. •

The dark, intimate gift of Max Ernst.

The Miniaturist

By Sanford Schwartz

In 1991, the centenary of his birth, a large Max Ernst retrospective, accompanied by a sumptuous catalog, traveled to London, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf and Paris. That it didn't come to the United States may have been due to some minor hitch rather than a lack of interest by any museum. Still, it's hard to imagine what real interest there would have been here. Of all the major figures associated with the interconnecting dada and surrealist movements—Duchamp, Picabia, Arp, Magritte, De Chirico, Man Ray, Dali, Yves Tanguy—Ernst, who died in 1976, may be the least associated with solid, satisfying work.

The very name Max Ernst still has a scent to it. The man more than held his own in a generation of artists who were dislocated and internationalist in their lives and in their work. A German national who was at various times a citizen of France and of the United States, he seems to have moved with equanimity through major shifts in the art scene, a hefty number of marriages and liaisons and, as an escapee from enemy alien camps, life-threatening political upheavals. The essence of Ernst the bohemian wanderer might be seen in photographs of him in the 1940s, particularly in Frederick Sommer's often reproduced portrait of the artist when, in his middle 50s, he lived in Sedona, Arizona, where he and Dorothea Tanning built their own house. White-haired and barechested, no longer young yet still fit for any adventure, with far-seeing pale eyes and a soft smile (and a weak chin), Ernst is a modern Merlin.

Max Ernst:
Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism
Museum of Modern Art, New York
March 14–May 2, 1993
The Menil Collection, Houston
May 28–August 29, 1993
The Art Institute of Chicago
September 15–November 30, 1993

But Ernst's pictures are all too Merlinish. His paintings, of clusters of dead-eyed birds emerging from chalky blank walls, or warring fire-charred creatures rising up from heaps of rubble, or stage-setlike forests with cardboard moons, or lagoons filled with muck-coated posts and boulders that turn into sharp-teethed monsters and coy nudes, or views into a twinkling outer space, convey a glib weirdness, or a forced playfulness. We're in the land of *Fantasia*, not the land of modern art.

In light of the artist's near-zero status, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism*, an exhibition organized by Walter Hopps of the Menil Collection, is a little miracle. Concentrating on Ernst's work up to 1927, with an emphasis on 1919 to 1924, which was when he found his voice, Hopps has made a show of a genuine lightweight charm and beauty. Ernst's art of the 1920s has long given critics and historians the most to chew on. In particular his collages—altered pictures might be the best description of these works, which are rarely about simply cutting something and pasting it on something else—have been acknowledged as influential. They were admired by Ernst's fellow dadaists when the first bunch were shown in Paris in 1920, and by the artists and writers who would in a few years call themselves surrealists. But the current show is the first to display the full scope of Ernst's art from that time, including paintings that have never been seen as part of his breakthrough years.

The artist who emerges isn't grand or heroic or even especially warming. These paintinglike collages and collagelike paintings present something refreshingly tonic: a sly, dry, devilish sense of play and fun, an artist on a serious lark. The pictures are about discoveries of one technique after another—techniques of hiding and half-revealing, of randomness and mismatching.

Often working with photo engravings used as illustrations for scientific and technical manuals, to which he added various images, or the subtlest lines or colors, sometimes rephotographing the works he had added to, and then sometimes adding to that, Ernst made collage a sneakier, less obviously artful process. (In terms of the actual work involved, though, his processes were more artful.) He wanted the viewer to sense alterations more than to see them. And what we're given is a sensation of some vague monkey business, of foreign materials lurking under the surface, as if each picture were a sort of counterfeit artwork.

Ernst's images don't add up to a larger image; they don't take us to a place or produce a distinct atmosphere.

Sanford Schwartz is the author of *Christen Købke* (Timken).

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What ties these textbook-illustrationlike pieces together is their unusually small size. Not only are most of the lively pictures easily handleable—many are five inches or less on a side—but we're often made to focus on the finest, thinnest line, which might be a horizon line or a line linking stars in a constellation.

Presumably because Ernst used already existing images, Hopps, in his catalog essay, compares him to Sigmar Polke and other contemporary figures. While it makes sense to think of Ernst as a forerunner of artists who "appropriate" images from photographs and other art, the experience of his work is quite different. His theater, so to speak, is the page, the picture that must be seen close up. Ernst has the attitude of the miniaturist: he sees everything from such a distance that people are always on the verge of becoming insects. For me, he is closest in spirit to virtuosos of aggressively small and very spiky linear worlds, artists such as Ensor (in his prints), or the early Miró, or the contemporary American painter Jim Nutt.

Yet the artist one thinks of most in connection with the young Ernst is Klee. In 1919 Ernst traveled to Munich to meet the Swiss artist, seeing an exhibition of his work and choosing drawings for a show to be held in Ernst's native Cologne. He also saw, in a volume that included reproductions, his first pictures by De Chirico, and he became familiar with a lot of dada materials for the first time, too. Ernst's trip to Munich has been considered the beginning of his mature life as an artist, because soon after returning home he began working with altered images. De Chirico and the dadaists have been presented as the crucial influences.

Exactly what Ernst got from Klee isn't spelled out in the various accounts. But a viewer of the present show can believe that Klee, who was twelve years older than Ernst, was the artist for whom he had the deepest affinity. What Klee gave him, it seems, was a green light for working small, a sense that the small in itself could be significant, difficult, modern. At his best Ernst seems to be a modernizer of Klee, a maker of Klee-like worlds but with mechanical materials, done, as it seems, without hands.

Perhaps Klee also played a part in the most important scholarly aspect of this reassessing show. This concerns a group of wonderful, small, dark oil paintings that will probably be unrecognizable as Ernst to most viewers. Some of these pictures, which show family outings in gardens or by the shore, or city life, or lovers courting, had formerly been dated 1913. William A. Camfield, whose

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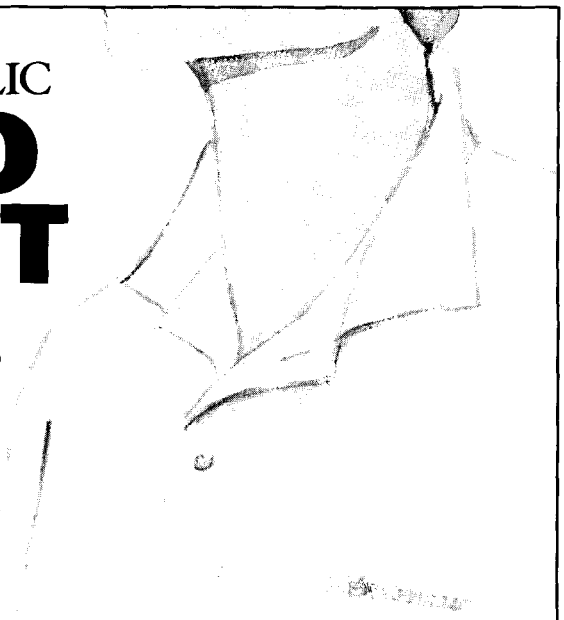

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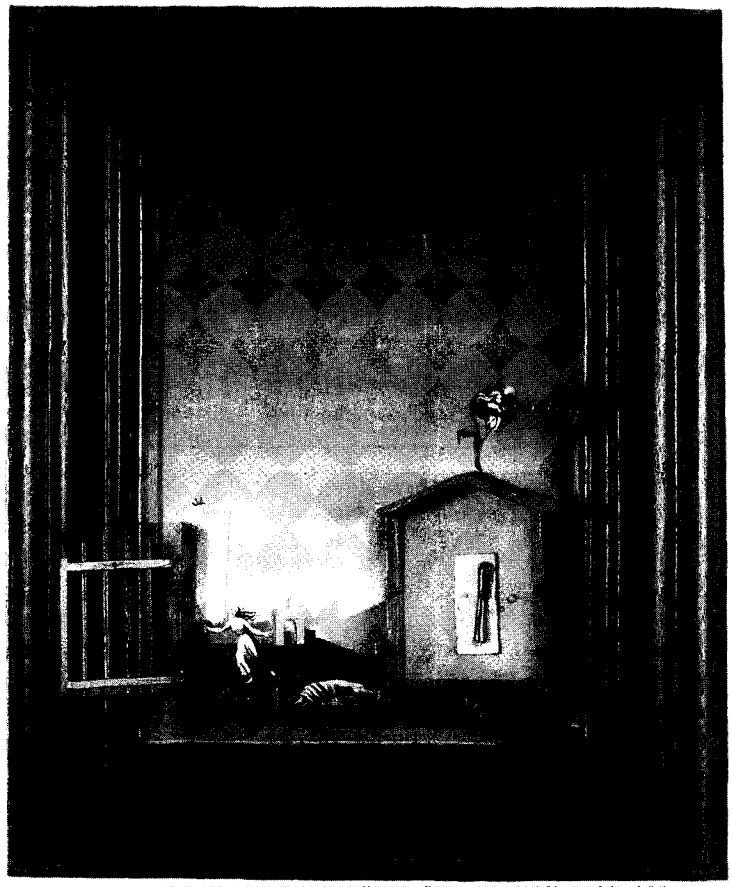
highly detailed study of Ernst in these years forms the bulk of the catalog, now dates them 1919 or circa 1919. Camfield says that a woozy half-attention has been paid to them all along. They've been ignored partly because they aren't exactly original. In their delicacy of touch and detailing, their indebtedness to naive art and their gravityless, swirling space, they're reminiscent of Chagall.

These pictures ought to be given more of a place in Ernst's history. There is a down-to-earthness about them, an everyday sensuousness, that is exactly what's missing from the later Ernst, the creator of so many grand concoctions. It also makes perfect sense to date them 1919, because in an emotional way they are true curtain-raisers on Ernst's work with collage. They're representations of the world that Ernst, as he participated wholeheartedly with the dada movement and then with the surrealists, was determined to reject.

Was Klee an inspiration for them? Ernst's commentators don't talk about this. Yet in the small size of these oils, and in the way that they simultaneously suggest modern art and age-old German settings, they might be blood relations of paintings that Klee was making at roughly the same time. Those paintings may be the best that Klee ever did. He was never as warm or as lush a painter as in these pictures, some of which include elements of gardens, Alpine villages and pine forests. Ernst's own little oils aren't in the same league, but they complement Klee's. Ernst supplies the people that Klee leaves out.

And one of Ernst's paintings from the time, *Immortality* (1919), is a masterwork to be placed alongside Klee, Chagall or anybody. We see a man and some children in a garden, a couple in one corner and a bit of a townscape, but the picture is primarily about the enveloping leafy, branchy garden world. Ernst's place in the history of art has nothing to do with *Immortality*, but I don't think he made a more satisfying painting than this mostly dark green summation of the bourgeois German family universe. If the image most associated with Ernst is that of a forest, or a wall, or something barricade-like from which all sorts of faces and figures materialize, then here, where the tracery of tree branches seems to be taking over the scene, he's painting the split second when he found his image (or when his image found him).

Yet it's in *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale* (1924) that Ernst surpassed himself. This picture has long been considered the foremost Ernst in the Museum of Modern Art's collection. But it never had the power that it has in this show, where it's seen as the climax of these five or so years of work, and where that work gives us the sense that we finally know what *Two Children* is about. The scene is a bright, treeless, grassy plot, with a big sky, a shed and enclosing wall on one side, a gate on the other. Tiny Ernstian people—painted in shades of gray, in a picture where all else is in a bright technicolor—dart this way and that, on the ground and in the air. One girl runs with a long knife, perhaps to defend herself against the bird in the sky, while another girl lies on the ground, perhaps dead, and a third person, charging as a football player might, an infant cradled in his arms, is on top of the shed, about to go right out of the picture.



TWO CHILDREN ARE THREATENED BY A NIGHTINGALE, 1924

Two Children is a unique picture for Ernst. It's his only work that is equally a painting and a kind of carpentered, crafted collage. It's a collage because the gate and the shed are actual elements, made out of wood, that are affixed to the picture as if they had been cut out and pasted on. More importantly, the gate swings out onto the frame, which becomes very much part of the "picture." In *Two Children*, Ernst went as far as he could in his desire to blend a counterfeit element into a picture's skin. We catch ourselves being fooled. We think how the 3-D elements have become "real," have invaded the real space of the frame, though they're hardly more real than what's inside the picture. *Two Children* seems to recall assemblages by Picasso, Schwitters and a host of others, plus works by trompe-l'oeil painters, but there's probably nothing quite like it.

It would be great to say that the exhibition rouses a desire to see a thoroughgoing Ernst retrospective, but the straight—the regular-sized, nonminiaturist—oil paintings that he began making a year or so after he had started the collages swiftly take us back to the fantastical, weightless Max Ernst of memory. What he was trying to do in them was basically the same thing that he was attempting in the tiny collaged works. He wanted to bring together unlikely elements in a single work in order to create a new species. But magic didn't happen with Ernst when his materials were only oil and canvas, and when his sizes grew much beyond the intimate.

Celebes (1921) probably Ernst's best-known painting, shows an elephant-like contraption, a weird machine/creature, looking toward a headless nude woman. *Ubu Imperator*, from a few years later, another celebrated work, shows a bizarre spinning top that is also somehow a building and a fatuous person. These and other paintings are momentarily arresting as images, but they're painted in such an anonymous and perfunctory way, with such arbitrary colors, that they might be period curiosities found in an antique store. In the Paris of the dadaists, an anti-art appearance, a superiority to mere art, was a lively issue. This rationale doesn't mean much, however, in the face of so many dormant pictures.

And in the paintings that Ernst did

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after 1924, which is the exhibition's "Dawn of Surrealism," the spectacle becomes increasingly disheartening. Ever faithful to his belief that an artwork had to be some combination of partnership and subterfuge, he "discovered," in 1925, a new method to start off the picture-making process. He called it "frottage." A piece of paper, say, was placed over a plank of wood, then rubbed with a pencil, and when the grain of wood materialized Ernst was on his way, coaxing images out of whatever turned up. Years after frottage came a technique he called "grattage," and by the late 1930s there was "decalcomania." But in looking at the paintings here, and in looking at reproductions of Ernst's paintings from 1927, one finds these technical experiments adding very little. Each painting is more like a one-liner. From one group of pictures to the next there is no continuity of color, touch, design or image.

What remains of interest in Ernst's art all the way through are his graphics. In John Russell's *Max Ernst* (1967), for instance, there are decorations by the artist—drawings, altered engravings—running throughout. They date from all periods in Ernst's life, and virtually any one of them, or any of the witty capital letters that begin the chapters, has as much life as any painting.

It seems legitimate to make sense of Ernst's work by relating it to his life, if only because he himself mixed the two together. He began writing dreamily vague and fragmentary autobiographical accounts, in which he described himself in the third person, in the late 1920s. Many of his writings were collected in a book in 1948, beautifully designed by the artist, that was aptly titled *Beyond Painting*. The most concrete material concerns childhood fears and realizations, and the one person in these notes with any substance other than Ernst himself is his father, who is described as a tyrant.

Nearly every surrealist, it seems, had a bad father. Oedipal violence was a necessary element in the psychoanalytical story that many of them were telling. Yet the conflict between Ernst and his father doesn't feel like a tacked-on tale. It appears to explain a lot about Ernst as an artist (and it's odd that it plays so small a role in the interpretations of his work).

Philipp Ernst by profession was a teacher (and later an administrator) in a school for deaf mutes. He supported a large family this way, and was known as an extremely proper and private individual, devoted to the Catholic faith. He was also an amateur painter, though reproductions of his highly realistic pictures show him to have been pretty well trained in most aspects of academic realism. And in an indirect way, Philipp was Max's only real teacher. That is, Max was never formally trained in art; whatever he learned in a technical, even professional, sense came from his father.

Yet Philipp was clearly outraged by Max's work from a certain point on, as his son was pleased to note. Philipp's hostility to his son's work was for Max a crucial part of his story. So in a way the very nature of Max Ernst's endeavor—his presentation of every facade as in some way a false facade; his belief that no work could exist without some element in it being borrowed from "real life" for the occasion—has in it a rejection of his father's rule-bound, airless realism.

The sheer existence of Ernst's huge body of work attests to his liberation from bourgeois convention. Yet did he completely liberate himself from his father? In persisting in being a painter, however much he thought he was continually sabotaging art, Ernst was also proving something to his father. He was proving that he could do it his way—and he was held in the grip of an art form for which he had little aptitude.

The wonder of the current show is that Ernst's drama, his breaking loose, can be experienced freshly. *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale* completes the story begun by the paintings of 1919, particularly *Immortality*. The two pictures are like the beginning and concluding acts of a play. The dark, branch-entwined family setting of *Immortality* suggests that every aspect of life is connected—that the future is in the present. And in the 1924 picture, with its sunlit openness and its image of a sprung situation, of knives and of children being abducted, the web of *Immortality* has been broken.

Seen after *Immortality*, *Two Children* is simultaneously about release and threat, openness and doom. The picture might be presenting an escape into a perilous freedom. It's hard to imagine a more ingenious or poetic emblem for any movement that wants to go "beyond painting." •

Big Chill

By Michael Lind

Remembering Denny by Calvin Trillin

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 210 pp., $19)

In 1957 Denny Hansen graduated from Yale. He was the archetype of the Yale man of his era (there were no Yale women, then, among the undergraduates): the hero of his California high school, a varsity swimmer, a Deke, a member of Scroll and Key, the Elizabethan Club and Phi Beta Kappa, and winner of the Francis Gordon Brown Prize awarded to the junior in Yale College who "most closely approaches the standard of good scholarship and manhood set by Francis Gordon Brown, 1901." He received a Rhodes scholarship. *Life* magazine published a profile of Denny, written by Michael Arlen, with photographs by Alfred Eisenstaedt, titled "A Farewell to Bright College Years." Later *Life* followed up with a photo story about his experiences as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford.

In 1990 Professor Roger D. Hansen of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C., told his favorite graduate student that he was considering suicide. The 55-year-old Hansen, a well-respected scholar and former member of the Carter National Security Council, had been suffering from terrible back problems and the side effects of medication for years. The next operation, according to the doctors, would leave him in a body cast for months. On New Year's Day the following year Hansen took an overdose of pills, but he failed to kill himself. In early February he borrowed a friend's weekend house at Rehoboth Beach in Delaware, shut the garage, turned on his car, set a book and a frying pan on the gas pedal, lay down on the floor of the garage and died from inhaling carbon monoxide.

Denny Hansen and Roger Hansen were the same man. In *Remembering Denny* Calvin Trillin, who was a classmate at Yale in the '50s, describes Hansen's life and death; or to be more precise, uses Hansen's life and death. This is not the first time, of course, that a writer has been tempted to turn a disaster that

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befalls friend or family into a story or a memoir or a screenplay or a Statement about Life. The reader gets a warning of what is in store early in Trillin's book, when he recounts a memorial service at which he and other members of the Yale Class of '57 gathered to discuss their dead classmate. Denny's prestige among his classmates, it becomes clear, was largely the result of his apotheosis in *Life*: "At Tersh's, someone had put a Sequoia High School yearbook and the *Life* piece on the hall table. The piece on Denny's graduation was in an issue of *Life* dated June 24, 1957...." *Life* is more real than life. The analogy to a similar scene in *The Big Chill* occurs to several of the participants.

These are people, in sum, who prefer to meet the raw and hurtful confusion of experience with cultural stereotypes, high or low. Trillin himself draws attention to the way that he and others tried to fit Hansen's life into literary patterns:

> Several people I spoke to reported mentioning Denny's death to friends or acquaintances and listening in return to a story of some other collegiate superhero who eventually dropped out of sight or ended up filling a sinecure in the company of a sympathetic classmate or is at this moment quietly drinking himself to death in a New Jersey suburb—versions of the football hero in Irwin Shaw's "The Eighty Yard Run" who could never live up to that bright and shining moment.

Those last four words are a fair measure of the platitudinous character of Trillin's enterprise. He plays off the facts of Hansen's life against a variety of clichés: the best and the brightest, the innocent '50s, the shining college years and so on. Far from criticizing such an essentially puerile approach to life, he indulges in it.

The controlling stereotype of the book is the golden college youth. Classmates discussing Hansen's suicide are drawn, like Trillin, to the archetype: "I would part company with those who said it was the Yale golden boy who had a fall," one of the participants says at the Big Chill session. The godlike college youth owes a lot, as a mythic figure, to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Oxbridge, and even more to the English public school, which reformers like Thomas Arnold of Rugby reorganized to produce muscular Christian gentlemen. The jut-jawed golden lad who dies young in battle for his church, his country and his school appears in "An Eton Boy," an essay by Arnold's son Matthew about Arthur Clynton Baskerville Mynors, who perished fighting the Zulus. Rupert Brooke took Mynors's place in the imaginations of a later generation of British.

The American equivalent of this British fatuity was a once-famous flower of Anglo-Saxon youth named Hobey Baker, the Philadelphia patrician, Princeton football hero and World War I flying ace who died in a plane crash in 1918 at 26. Baker shows up in *This Side of Paradise* as "Amory Blaine" (Hobey's full name was Hobart Amory Hare Baker) and later, this time as himself, in Mark Goodman's historical novel *Hurrah for the Next Man Who Dies*. In 1966 he received the tribute of an entire book, *The Legend of Hobey Baker*, by John Davies. Phineas, in *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles, has a secure place alongside Hobey in this tradition, and the myth is also recognizable in the film *Dead Poets Society*, in which a sensitive prep-school lad is driven to suicide by his overbearing father.

All of this is meaningless today, even to most graduates of the Ivy League, and so Trillin must labor to reconstruct the status-obsessed elite college milieu of the '50s in order to explain what Hansen "meant" to him and his classmates. The effect is that of a joke that cannot be told until its premise is explained in deadly detail. In a way, the joke is on Trillin, because Roger Hansen did not, in fact, fit the mythic bill. Trillin, who was one of the token Jews at Yale in the '50s, himself makes clear that Hansen was not a typical member of the Northeastern WASP elite, but a middle-class meritocrat of Danish descent from the West Coast. Moreover, a moderately accomplished scholar and a veteran of government service who dies at the age of 55, a decade short of retirement age, is not exactly a golden youth cut short in his prime, or a man who can be said to have utterly failed his promise.

For some of the people gathered in Tersh Boasberg's living room—this is the Big Chill session—"finding out that Denny had been gay basically offered an explanation of what had happened to his life." The surprising discovery that Hansen was gay—never mind that Hansen had told his *real* friends—provides Trillin with an opportunity to toy with still more stereotypes and indulge in more banalities.

"A few months after Denny's death," Trillin writes, "my younger daughter started collecting information on the '50s view of homosexuality; she was writing a paper on the subject for a class at Yale." Careful to inform us that his daughters have grown up in the family home down the street from the famous Stonewall gay bar, in an integrated straight-and-gay neighborhood, and around gay family friends, Trillin says: "Trying to answer her questions about the views we held in the '50s made me feel a bit like someone from Salem, thirty years after the unfortunate trials there, trying to explain how, in the context of the times, an outbreak of witchcraft did seem to be a rather logical explanation of what was going on in town." At great length Trillin describes his ignorant youthful attitudes toward homosexuality, and even regrets unintentionally hurtful jokes.

"It has been my experience that almost anyone who asks to speak at a funeral or memorial service wants to talk about himself," Trillin noted earlier in the book. Indeed. He is the kind of liberal who can confess his former insensitivity and list his gay friends and then proceed to the most appalling condescension:

> Some of them asked me if he had AIDS, and I sometimes answered, "He didn't need AIDS." I don't know what he had, but I know what he didn't have: his health, his work, somebody to share his life with. For those of us who define our lives in terms of our families, he was unimaginably alone.

There is something really unpleasant about that remark, about the way Trillin emphasizes his generous sympathy toward poor lonely misunderstood homosexuals while subtly assuring the reader that he is a fine, well-adjusted family man.

When Trillin at last gets to the subject of Hansen's love life, he stumbles badly and fails to justify the intensity of his own interest in it. Hansen, it appears, did have a difficult time dealing with his sexual orientation—made more difficult, perhaps, by the golden boy image with which he was saddled. "It was inconceivable," one friend remarks, "that anyone could be successful and athletic and masculine and so forth and be homosexual." This is not a far cry from the further assumption that a successful and athletic and masculine man might also take his own life because he was a homosexual.

Hansen had a relationship for many years with a woman to whom he left much of his estate; and he was in analysis for a very long time. (His analysis, along with rumors that he was homosexual, may have kept him out of the Foreign Service.) These important facts of his life might be thought to vindicate the emphasis that Trillin puts on '50s-era homophobia. And yet Hansen's story does not deliver the gay pathos on which Trillin is banking. For Hansen ended his relationship with the woman in question in favor of romantic relationships with various men. "Denny himself lived with somebody off and on for a couple of years," Trillin tells us. He socialized with a circle of gay colleagues and acquaintances who were his own age. If this was

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not coming to terms with his sexual orientation, one wonders what would be.

Despite all of Trillin's pages about Hansen's formerly private life (Trillin helpfully shares the name of his dear friend's favorite gay bars with the American reading public), there is not the slightest evidence that Hansen's homosexuality played any part in his suicide. "I'm in a lot of pain, and will not consider further back surgery," Hansen wrote in his suicide note:

> The probabilities of any surgical relief are too marginal for me to hang on and suffer any more. When the pain becomes unbearable, I will take my own life. I will do so with regret, and with the feeling that there are no other viable options.

If Hansen was telling the truth in his suicide note, if he killed himself to evade an almost certain future of repeated surgery and crippling illness, then his suicide tells us nothing about his judgment of his own career, or about the plight of the homosexual in America, or about the fate of a generation, or about American elites—all subjects that Trillin wants to expand upon, using Hansen's casket as a lectern. "Maybe," he writes, "his problems had nothing to do with 'honors, expectations and nonfulfillment' or with a doomed attempt to fit into the 'poisonous template of the '50s'—but I know that not many people who knew Denny when the sun shone on him so brilliantly would ever believe that."

Whether or not Roger Hansen was a hero for his time, *Remembering Denny* is a book for today. The book is not so much about Hansen's life and death as about the feelings of Trillin and other friends about his life and death, and about their feelings about their feelings. In the out-of-control confessional culture of America, Trillin has broken new ground. He has pioneered a new genre of therapeutic-liberal gossip: the vicarious confession. Perhaps other well-adjusted celebrity authors will be emboldened to muse upon the misfortunes of their own obscure, screwed-up and recently buried acquaintances. The indifference to Hansen's personal dignity is manifest even in Trillin's title: the subject, or rather the object, of this book chose to be known, after all, as Roger D. Hansen, but Trillin insists on calling him by his college nickname. (He does not similarly freeze himself in time; *Remembering Denny* is not by Bud Trillin.)

Robert Tucker, one of Hansen's mentors and a member of an older and sterner generation, struck the right note of reticence and gravity at the memorial service, in remarks that Trillin repeats. "In memorializing the life of a colleague and a friend, we cannot ignore the fact that the circumstances in which Roger Hansen died are particularly solemn," Tucker began. "If death is always an event we find shocking, the act of taking one's life conveys an added measure of dread." Of dread, of reticence in the presence of another's anguish, of authentic grief, of real friendship, there is not a trace in *Remembering Denny*. There is only gossip, psychobabble, nostalgia, sonority, titillation and cliché.

Thanks to Trillin, most of the people who encounter the name of Roger Hansen will remember him not as a foreign policy scholar of limited but real achievements, but as a depressed homosexual who committed suicide after failing to live up to the expectations of his tut-tutting Yale classmates. More than a decade before his death, Roger Hansen ended all contact with Calvin Trillin. Maybe he had a hunch.

MICHAEL LIND is executive editor of *The National Interest*.

Field of Dreams

BY ROY PORTER

The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination by Donald Worster

(Oxford University Press, 304 pp., $27.50)

Until around a quarter century ago, the history of man's interaction with nature attracted scant interest. That fact speaks volumes. For long it was taken for granted by politicians and plantation owners alike that nature was simply there for man to do whatever he liked with (and in those days the masculine pronoun was always employed). The land could be bought and sold, exploited, cultivated, quarried, polluted and abandoned. And the same went for the creatures in nature's great garden. They lay around waiting to be owned, tamed, farmed, hunted, slaughtered, turned into trophies or consumed, just as humans pleased.

Almost all these plain truths have now been challenged. Habits to which no one for centuries gave a second thought, such as wearing fur coats, have become, in some quarters at least, quite taboo. Voices from many quarters, from economists no less than ecologists, now insist that it is reckless to treat the soil and its flora and fauna simply as raw materials or as a Disneyland. Radical philosophers go further: it is not just shortsighted and self-defeating, it is immoral. The human race, they declare, has no freehold upon nature; if people have rights over animals, don't creatures have reciprocal rights against mankind?

These assertions are truly revolutionary. Though the civil rights and women's movements have met spoiling rearguard resistance, the case for universal human rights has long been ethically incontrovertible. But the notion of nature as an end in itself, enjoying certain "natural rights," is genuinely philosophically innovative, at least for the West's Judeo-Christian and Enlightenment thought worlds. Opinion-makers in our society are no longer quite sure whether it is permissible to train circus animals, to perform vivisection experiments or to exhaust mineral resources as we like. And sensitive thinkers have become alert to the possibility that even if we now believe such things are allowable, we may shortly be forced to acknowledge that they were but the shameful relics of anthropocentric impertinence.

Needless to say, this awesome transformation in our notions of nature and man's place in it did not spring spontaneously out of pure thought. It has grown out of the ecological crisis perceived since the 1960s. Environmental degradation (pesticides and pollution, global warming, ozone-layer depletion, the greenhouse effect, nuclear contamination) together with the energy crisis, rampant world population growth (8 billion by 2025, the forecast runs) and finally the advent of AIDS have made us recognize that human activity, or more precisely, capitalist rapacity, is drastically and maybe irrevocably upsetting nature's balance. Spaceship Earth, they say, is nose-diving out of control, and fears grow of some Malthusian nemesis, if not against us, at least upon our children or our children's children.

One consequence of this alarm has been a turn to environmental history,

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tracing the story of what Keith Thomas, in a distinguished contribution to the genre, called *Man and the Natural World.* Scholars from various disciplines have been drawing attention to the filigree cultural webs enmeshing man and nature. Literary critics have examined images of the bucolic and the pastoral, wilderness and wasteland. Feminists have interrogated myths of Mother Nature and "the lay of the land." Geographers and anthropologists have probed the social psychology of landscape perception: How is the terrain variously perceived as natural or social, sacred or profane, wild or tame, beautiful or ugly? And historians have traced Western concepts of the natural order.

The historical scholar who has done most to chart the rise of ecological thinking and environmental concern is Donald Worster. In true pioneering spirit, as long ago as 1973 he produced *American Environmentalism: The Formative Period, 1860-1915*, which was followed by *Nature's Economy: the Roots of Ecology* (1977). In many other studies he has explored the changing consciousness of nature as the nation pressed west. His new book collects papers on ecological crisis and ecological consciousness written over the last twenty years, and they form a satisfyingly coherent whole.

If there is a core to this inspiring body of interpretation, it lies in Worster's tracking the growth of environmental consciousness from the initial indifference permitted by the extraordinary bounty that nature granted to New World settlers. He examines the rise of protests against wanton environmental destruction, showing intersections with infant philosophical and scientific disciplines dedicated to fathoming the economy of nature herself. From the coining of the term "ecology" by the nineteenth-century German naturalist Ernst Haeckel, through the notion of "ecosystem" that was developed by the British plant biologist A. G. Tansley, and beyond, such thinking has been designed to provide springboards for action, that is, for conservation. If sometimes anachronistically turning all sorts of people into ecological "precursors," Worster has furnished ecology with an impressive historical pedigree, a hall of fame.

Worster's writings radiate passion and purpose. The American tragedy, in his eyes, springs from the fact that the noble principles behind the foundation of the Union were unwittingly calculated to destroy with spectacular rapidity the new moral world that they aspired to create. The pursuit of liberty American-style could easily be reduced to the absolute right to private property and the total freedom to do as you pleased with what you owned. Such, beyond doubt, was the dream of the millions of peasants and proletarians who flooded in from Europe. America promised soil aplenty for all and, where necessary, slave labor to work it.

And, if more formal justification were needed for this bonanza, ideological vindications were at hand. Christian doctrines portrayed man as alone made in God's image. Homo sapiens was qualitatively superior to all other creatures, who, lacking souls, were accessories to human purposes, not ends in themselves. Scripture taught man to go forth and multiply, and to extend his dominion over nature (albeit, after the Fall, by the sweat of his brow). Manifest destiny decreed that the white man should clear the forests, cull wild creatures (and native Indians) and generally, as Francis Bacon had urged, extend "the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible." And what better raw materials for the Protestant work ethic to work on than a whole virgin continent?

Moreover, at the very moment of the republic's foundation, a body of political economy was providentially published, courtesy of Adam Smith and his disciples, arguing that the source of all value was labor. This meant, in effect, that nature had no intrinsic value until commandeered for human uses. Thanks to the Hidden Hand, argued political economists, the pursuit of private wealth would produce a magic market—or, in a later idiom, greed was good. "Industrialism," observes Worster, "has sought not the preservation but the total domination of the natural order and its radical transformation into consumer goods."

As a result of this nativity for the nation and the faith attending the happy event, Americans became habituated to a slash-and-burn economy. Whenever one terrain, or one mode of husbandry or extraction, succumbed to the law of diminishing returns, there were always pastures new. And once the Pacific was reached, capital could relocate overseas, slashing and burning to the ends of the earth. The price has been the reckless wastefulness now so plain that it needs no elaboration, now so potent many cannot imagine how it will be checked. In successive essays, Worster documents worsening soil erosion, looming water shortages and the approach of new dust-bowl conditions, all thanks to an agribusiness whose commitment to a fast buck today is bequeathing future generations unpayable bills. More than 1,000 species are now on the endangered list in America alone.

Worster examines the various voices gathering over the last century to swell the chorus of complaint. Essayists from Thoreau onward worshiped the wilderness and denounced the depletion of forests and their creatures, the senseless exhaustion of soil through overfarming. Public officials developed programs for land conservation and irrigation. The expansion of badlands, culminating in the 1930s Dust Bowl, required rethinking and reform. And all the time, appreciation of nature's own economy was ripening.

Alongside geomorphologists and botanists, experts in forestry and soil mechanics acquired a new understanding of the intricacy of nature's workings. The biosphere, maintained ecology's trailblazers, was not a divine cornucopia or grab bag, but a delicately tuned symbiotic system in which each element was integral to the whole. Especially from the 1920s, holism became the keyword in many fields of science—biology, plant geography and ecology, natural history, evolutionary studies, psychology and medicine. Informed by the notion of a self-regulating, self-sustaining whole, ecology blossomed as a discipline in its own right, its subject matter the system of nature.

And beyond science, other traditions passionately advanced the conviction that nature was more than a tribute to human exploitation. Worster has a fascinating essay about the tendencies within radical Protestantism, typified by the Scottish-born settler John Muir, the founder of the Sierra Club and the "first great leader of American environmentalism," that saw sermons in stones and viewed the wilderness as a tabernacle for the salvation of the soul. Romantic writers and artists likewise cultivated a crypto-religious aesthetic of the natural sublime. Nature was to be treated with awe, insofar as it constituted the supreme sanctuary from the world that was too much with us.

By the 1930s, Worster shows, environmentalist consciousness was falling into place. Conspicuous among his heroes is the celebrated holist Frederic Clements, who developed the theory of a vegetational succession culminating in natural ecological maturity. Terrains would function "superorganically," displaying an intrinsic wisdom. A moving essay also pays homage to Aldo Leopold, the founder of the Wilderness Society, whose studies of biotic communities depicted the holistic interdependence of all environmental features. In such a view, land was not a commodity, it was a community. By the 1940s such ecologists had expounded their great truth: spared human interference, nature creates its own optimal equilibrium, and is essentially orderly and teleological. By the

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onset of the ecological crisis, works such as Eugene P. Odum's *The Fundamentals of Ecology* (1953) had shown that whereas modern man is greedy and destructive, nature, by contrast, is self-regenerating and wise.

Such doctrines were what millions of young idealists hungered to hear. But history plays strange tricks, and Worster is obliged to address a critical irony. For even as such views were gaining ground, they were being assailed from within by an ecological counterrevolution. Drawing on earlier dissenters like Henry Gleason, figures such as Daniel Botkin began to proclaim what Worster tellingly rebukes as the "new permissiveness in ecology." What may be called "bad guy" ecologists denied that there was any self-sustaining natural order, viewing nature instead as operating under a system of "private enterprise" in which it was every sapling for itself. Whereas true ecology offered a wholesome vision of harmonious, homeostatic nature, "bad guy" ecologists depicted it as no more than a tumult of competing forces; perpetual change produced not harmony but disturbance. Nature did not restore herself, and there was no biotic order or telos. Under such circumstances, the classic ecologist's dream of keeping nature natural was radically subverted—for there was no natural norm to preserve.

Worster disdains "permissive ecology." It is not scientific, he says, it is flagrantly ideological, the survival-of-the-fittest Social Darwinism that once served the robber barons retailored to gratify farmers and developers. "Permissive ecology," he argues, projects Reaganomics onto nature; woodlands are misrepresented as Wall Street, and the law of the prairies is devil take the hindmost. Worster condemns this "triumph of Social Darwinist or entrepreneurial ideology over a commitment to environmental preservation." But, as the words themselves reveal, a crucial ambiguity runs through Worster's position: on the one hand, the claim that scientific and historical facts speak loud and clear on his side; on the other, the invocation of moral idealism ("commitment").

In his design to expose "permissive ecology" as the voice of business, Worster scrutinizes other sorts of well-orchestrated myth and hypocrisy that he sees bedeviling the nation. These include the notion (perhaps once justified) that what is good for the farmer is good for America. And this, in turn, has resulted in the disastrous tenet, blindly upheld until recently, that there is a national obligation to maximize acreage under cultivation, no matter what cost to the ecosystem or to the public purse.

Worster mobilizes history to correct errors in American (and more broadly Western) economics and values, as the heedless espousal of private property and private aggrandizement has brought us onto a collision course with nature. History should thus judge and teach. His mission is moral—"scientific analysis cannot take the place of moral reasoning"—and he is sure about the values to be imparted. We need an end to greed. We need concepts of public trust rather than private property. We need a natural ethic: "We must," he writes,

> preserve all species, subspecies, varieties, communities and ecosystems we possibly can. We must not, through our actions, cause any more species to go extinct.... We can and must do this primarily because the living heritage of evolution has an intrinsic value that we have not created but only inherited and enjoyed. That heritage demands our respect, our sympathy and our love.

Is this practical? Worster cannot say, but "I do know it is the right path."

Many would say amen to these values. But the discussion of Worster's work cannot end there. Scholars should be self-critical as well as evangelical. For all his redoubtable strengths as a historian and commentator, here lies a crucial weakness in Worster's work. Often he leans on the testimony of history and science. But sometimes he takes his stand on moral ideals, and frequently he dismisses "science" with which he disagrees as "ideology." The result is confusing. Worster's work leaves us unsure whether we should follow his ecological doctrines because they are scientifically sound or politically and morally correct.

From the vantage of the degenerate Old World, it is difficult not to read Worster's creeds as symptomatic of the American problem no less than remedial. For one thing, a suspicious strand of nostalgia pervades this book. Worster is a peddler of pastoral: "There is, after all," he tells us, "a way back into the garden." We have been warned, notably by Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City*, of the hankerings of intellectuals after a rural harmony typically located in our grandparents' days. Keith Thomas has shown how high-minded views of the natural world were largely the creation of a bourgeois intelligentsia responding to an emergent nineteenth-century urban order; sentimentality about creatures could be indulged once they had been safely tamed, the wilderness was savored once agriculture had provided townsfolk with ample to eat.

And surely we should acknowledge that writings about nature may be telling us less about nature than about the staking out of social discriminations. Along these lines, Keith Tester's recent book *Animals and Society* maintains that militant opponents of vivisection, radical vegetarians and supporters of animal liberation are not really expressing views about creatures; they are, rather, seizing the moral high ground above fellow humans (whom they may ironically detest as brutish). It is easy to perceive similar processes at work among militant Green groups in Europe, who sometimes seem less animated by regard for nature than by hatred of humans. At its 1991 annual conference, the British Green Party called for a 25 percent reduction in the population of the United Kingdom. Skeptics discerned in this a hint of the old eugenic distaste for certain types of human beings—indeed, of the eugenic belief that some were "better dead." It was not lost on commentators that ecology had powerful champions among the Nazis, whose youth movement made a cult of walking in the forests and climbing the mountains, and for whom natural purity consorted very nicely with racial purity and anti-urbanism. Love of nature often goes with mixed feelings about mankind.

Thus the attempt to trace the history of attitudes toward the environment generally runs into thickets of moral posturing and nostalgia-mongering. Nature is easily fetishized, as are bygone times. The two often coalesce. In Britain a "heritage" industry is thriving, kindled by the inane assumption that everything ancient is valuable and by definition worth conserving. One consequence has been that much that is recent has to be magically turned old, as part of that process dubbed by recent historians "the invention of tradition." Similarly, there is the danger that the cultural or the artificial will be turned into the spuriously natural. We are all aware of this with "natural" foodstuffs and "natural" fibers; but it applies equally with "natural" landscapes. In Britain lobbies use emotional blackmail to preserve hedgerows and coppices, declaring that they form part of a dwindling natural heritage. But the truth is that, far from being relics of some pristine terrain, these features were creations of eighteenth-century agrarian capitalism, whose enclosures created the checkerboard pattern of small fields that the English fondly fantasize were left behind after the Flood. We may prefer yesterday's capitalist countryside to tomorrow's and therefore seek to save it; but let us not fool ourselves that we thereby rescue nature from human depredation. All nature is the nature that we make.

And herein lies the problem with

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much ecological consciousness, and with Worster's writings. They are suffused by a yearning after terrains of the past, often fictive ones. Worster is rather proud of it: "nostalgia runs all through this society," he writes, "fortunately, for it may be our only hope for salvation." Those who want to turn back the clock, however, excite my suspicions. I also distrust the simplistic "good guys" versus "bad guys" reading that such sentimentality yields of the history of ecological ideas and of current debates within ecological science. Not least, I feel wary of those who, like Worster, would sell me salvation. Their teachings sometimes seem to say more about personal loves and hates than about the fate of the globe.

It was the fate, even the glory, of the New World to receive from the Old World all the visionaries of promised lands, from the most competitive capitalist convinced that paradise was a ranch and a rifle, to Christian mystics and collectivist socialists persuaded that Eden was about to be reinstated on the banks of the Susquehanna. The former won out, though the latter—with their revivalist fervor and folksy, anti-materialist idealism—have provided inspiring if impotent opposition. Old World cynics might, of course, be tempted to conclude that robber barons and Worsterian idealists go together in some symbiotic cultural ecosystem, rather as the eighteenth-century capitalist landowner amused himself by planting an austere hermit in his parklands to salve his conscience. America sometimes seems to be able to enjoy its ultramaterialism only so long as it also takes the medicine of moral idealism.

With its doubts about technology, its commitment, harking back to the New Deal, to social programs and its nature-trusting faith, Worster's teleological idealism is highly uplifting. Still, there is little reason to suppose that his neat antitheses—green versus greed, conservation versus consumption—can ever exist, except in the realm of comforting moral tropes. The risk is that they assume a specious reality and writers start believing their own rhetoric. "I can see the possibility in the not too distant future," preaches Worster,

> of a revised Constitution that schoolchildren will learn about and adults will sit down to read now and then. It will declare that all the lands of these United States belong in a final sense to all the people and that present occupants have the use of them for their fruits only. It will demand that any use of the land not leave any lasting impairment, or diminish its beauty, or endanger public health. That new document will affirm, in the spirit of Aldo Leopold, that all forms of life, nonhuman and human alike, are henceforth to be considered as citizens dwelling together in this great and virtuous republic. That is a Constitution I sense is coming—a Constitution that the course of our history suggests is coming.

The ecological science whose history Worster has admirably traced created new styles of thinking about the ways of nature. Ecology is an ongoing inquiry. Environmental research is not monolithic; like all science, it is characterized by open and critical debate. Worster has done great service in focusing on the development of this science. What must now be avoided above all is the oversimplification and hijacking of ecology's findings by those with Luddist, escapist or even chiliastic leanings. Seventeenth-century Puritans, in the Old World and the New, preached that unless folks mended their ways, the world would shortly come to an end. The aim was laudable, the threat proved erroneous and Puritanism was discredited. It would be tragic in our own time if uncautious hype about eco-disaster likewise undermined the very cause that concerned people like Worster seek to advance.

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On the Road

BY PEARL K. BELL

The Novellas of Martha Gellhorn

(Knopf, 625 pp., $27.50)

Martha Gellhorn, to those of a certain age, is best known as the third wife of Ernest Hemingway—to the dismay, retrospectively, of both. Though their stormy marriage lasted a mere five years, such is the enduring hammerlock of the Hemingway myth that it has reduced the stature of all the women who were involved with him to that of a satellite, trailing in the penumbra of his fame.

In the case of Gellhorn, this diminution of her own distinctive life and career has been grossly unfair. In her prime, during the 1930s and '40s, she was a journalistic phenomenon of a kind that has by now completely vanished: a glamorous, sexy, fearless, smart, boozy, chain-smoking, aggressive correspondent who had only to hear gunfire exploding somewhere in the world and she was on the next train or boat or plane, eager to provide readers with a highly personal eyewitness report from the front line. And the blond-bombshell persona was as much a part of her reputation as her reportage. Gellhorn, like other mettlesome women correspondents of her generation—Marguerite Higgins, Dorothy Thompson, Virginia Cowles, the photographer Margaret Bourke-White—had the aura of a movie star. These journalists knew everyone, went everywhere, had a keen nose for a story and never forgot their makeup. In our liberated time, gender and glamour are confined to the T.V. studio or theatrically contrived settings, in which female journalists such as Barbara Walters or Diane Sawyer, impeccably got up, can transmit the news without being on the spot or slogging through the mine fields.

Gellhorn was determined to be a serious novelist as well as a foreign correspondent, which makes Hemingway's eclipse of her doubly unfair. In the course of her long, full and energetic life—she is now 85 years old—she has published six novels, several volumes of short stories and four collections of novellas, as well as two volumes of dispatches and reports. Long out of print, some of the novels have in recent years been reprinted by the Virago Press of London, ever faithful to the work of forgotten women writers. The four collections of novellas have now been gathered into a single capacious volume that her publishers hope may release her from the manacle of Ernest Hemingway, and provide an opportunity for an unblinkered appraisal of the work and the life of a woman who has been a tireless witness and recorder of this horrible century.

Martha Gellhorn was born into a socially prominent St. Louis family in 1908. Though there had been observant Jewish ancestors on her mother's side, the Gellhorns were thoroughly assimilated by the time of Martha's generation. Yet the children briefly attended Sunday school at the Ethical Culture Society, in a faint acknowledgment of their Jewish heritage. Like her mother, Martha was enrolled in that pluperfect bluestocking college, Bryn Mawr, but she was too restless to wait for her degree. Dropping out

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at the end of her junior year, impatient "to go everywhere, see everything, and write about it," she was briefly a proofreader at THE NEW REPUBLIC and a cub reporter in Albany, before sailing for Paris, where she worked first for *Vogue*, then as a correspondent for the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. There she met her first husband, Bertrand de Jouvenel, a seductive French aristocrat, a Radical Socialist and the stepson of Colette, with whom he had a tempestuous affair in late adolescence—nature imitating the art of *Chéri*.

Gellhorn has never written about her short-lived marriage to de Jouvenel, nor is it entirely clear, in Carl Rollyson's biography of her, *Nothing Ever Happens to the Brave* (1990), why and when they parted for good, and what she felt about her husband's somewhat tainted political beliefs and his view, even after Hitler came to power, that "the best way not to fight with the Germans is to be friends with them." Though in later years the half-Jewish de Jouvenel vehemently denied that he had ever been pro-Nazi, it is indisputable that he was a friend of Otto Abetz, the Nazi agent who became the German "ambassador" to occupied Paris. De Jouvenel shared the dubious position of many French intellectuals before the war that the Nazis would sweep away the old, rotten bourgeois Europe, and they were willing to pay the price. How his young American wife felt about such politics remains a mystery.

By 1934, at the age of 26, a resolutely independent Gellhorn was footloose, single and back in the United States, where she was hired by the ascetic Harry Hopkins as an investigator for the Federal Economic Relief Administration. Many years later she wryly recalled that for the interview with Hopkins she wore a Schiaparelli suit and had "lots of eye shadow, mascara and lipstick ... certainly not [the style] for social workers in federal employment." When Gellhorn's reports were brought to Eleanor Roosevelt's attention, the two women became lifelong friends, and after the publication of *The Trouble I've Seen*, a collection of novellas that grew out of Gellhorn's findings for the FERA, the first lady enthusiastically hailed the book in her syndicated column, "My Day."

Ironically, though she wrote these stories about victims of the Depression before she ever laid eyes on Hemingway, the reviewers of *Trouble* summoned up his name in their praise: "Hemingway does not write more authentic American speech. Nor can [he] teach Martha Gellhorn anything about economy of language." The stage was set for the fateful encounter, which took place in 1936, in a bar in Key West, where Hemingway was living with his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, and their two young sons. Gellhorn was 28; Hemingway, 37. Remembering Jean Stafford's remark about *her* second husband—"We should not only never have married, we should never have met"—one can feel that the acid words apply just as devastatingly to the Gellhorn-Hemingway liaison. But the bad days were still far in the future, and the happiest time soon to come in Spain during the Civil War, which she covered for *Collier's*. Spain was the high moment: they were young, in love, unafraid of bombs and gunfire, exulting in the excitement and urgency of the Spanish Republic's defiance of fascism. As she wrote years later, "Spain was my cause; Spain was what I loved and believed in."

After Franco's victory, Hemingway returned to Key West to arrange his divorce from Pfeiffer, and Gellhorn stayed on in Europe, sending vivid dispatches to *Collier's* from France, England and Czechoslovakia. In Prague she gathered the material for a novel in which she hoped to dramatize the sickening effect of Chamberlain's "peace in our time" on the doomed country, and the tragic plight of the refugees who had been streaming into Czechoslovakia from Germany and Austria, and were now being forced to go back "like people escaping a flood, with the water rising and spreading behind them."

On her return from Europe in 1939 Martha joined her famous lover in Cuba, where he had moved from Key West to wait out his divorce and begin his novel of the Spanish war, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. She rented a badly run-down finca not far from Havana, fixed it up to make the master comfortable and then settled down with him to write *her* novel about Prague. Though it has some poignant passages about the refugees scurrying in desperation to escape the German net, *A Stricken Field* (1940) is too woodenly self-conscious as it shuttles between journalistic facts and sentimental invention. Yet it seems astonishing that she was able to write it at all, just a room away from the most celebrated of American writers working steadily at his book about Spain. Hemingway's novel, instantly acclaimed by the critics, was published two weeks before they were married, in November 1940, and was dedicated to Gellhorn. Her novel about Prague had been published earlier in the year, to mixed reviews.

In Cuba the new Mrs. Hemingway made a valiant effort to be the perfect wife and stepmother, a pliable helpmeet selflessly devoted to her husband, learning how to fish and hunt, how to fire a shotgun, how to please her man. Yet within a few years Hemingway's euphoria—over his marriage and the enormous success of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*—began to evaporate. He became increasingly disgruntled and abusive, drinking more and more recklessly and accusing her of abandoning him every time she walked out the door.

As the battles raged more fiercely in Europe, she ached to be back in action, wherever it was happening, writing from the war zone, doing what she did best. She found it intolerable to sit out the war in Cuba as a homebody behind high walls. As the war heated up, she wrote in the preface to a collection of her dispatches, *The Face of War* (1959), she felt "paralyzed by conflicting emotions; private duty, public disgust and a longing to forget both and join those who were suffering in the war." By the fall of 1943, against Hemingway's vituperative objections, she left Cuba for Europe, hoping to cover the Allied invasion of the continent. And she kept bombarding him with telegrams and letters, urging him to join her in Europe so that they could once again experience, together, the "fervor and recklessness" of their glorious time in Spain.

Her insistence that Hemingway should not remain on the sidelines of the most awesome events of his time was, as Kenneth Lynn has argued, a fatal mistake that doomed a marriage already in a precarious state. Hemingway had become the prisoner of his own myth, Lynn writes, and

> extraordinary gallantry under fire would now be expected of him as a matter of

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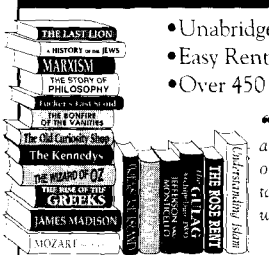

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course if he got involved in the fight for Europe. But while he was still an exceptionally courageous man ... age, physical problems and alcohol had taken their toll, and his awareness of these factors could well have placed a strain on his nerves.... [Yet Martha] did her utmost to make her man return to combat. Perhaps that was one of the reasons why he began to treat her so viciously.

In a cunning, mean-spirited move that sabotaged her professionally, he offered to cover the invasion for *Collier's*—*her* magazine!—and since press corps rules limited each periodical to one correspondent, she was forced off the story she wanted most crucially to write about. Plucky and resourceful, she managed with stealth and daring to sneak into Normandy for the great landing, and during the rest of the European conflict she was everywhere—England, Italy, France, Poland, Holland, Germany.

Gellhorn maintained a dignified silence about her famous second husband for many years after their divorce in 1945. But since nothing brings out the avenging pens like a ruined marriage, Hemingway was not in the least forbearing about *her*. In *Across the River and into the Trees* he vindictively described the character modeled on Gellhorn as having "more ambition than Napoleon and about the talent of the average High School Valedictorian." It was not until 1978 that Gellhorn ended her silence about Hemingway in *Travels with Myself and Another*, a light-hearted and very funny collection of pieces about "horror journeys" to some of the most uncomfortable places on earth.

Among these travelogues is a surprisingly affectionate and engaging portrait of the great man who accompanied her in 1941 on an exhausting trip to China. Just married to the woman he then admired and adored, flushed with the tremendous success of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway was at first reluctant to make the arduous trip to the Far East. But once he gave in to her urgings, he proved to be the most unrufflable and good-humored of traveling companions, taking the most dismaying conditions in stride. (He is referred to throughout the piece as U.C., or Unwilling Companion, his name never mentioned.) What is most interesting about this portrait of Hemingway is Gellhorn's shrewd rendering of the way he absorbed the world around him, free of all the overbearing macho swagger, when he was at his charming best.

When they stopped for a while in Hong Kong on the way to China, Hemingway, in his customary fashion, gathered a jovial entourage of drinking buddies around him and dug in for a high old time. But as Gellhorn reveals, this was not just fun and games to Hemingway the writer: he "could not bear party chatter, or discussions of politics or the arts, but never tired of true life stories, the more unlikely the better.... Aside from being his form of amusement, he learned about a place and people through the eyes and experiences of those who lived there." Nor was Gellhorn shy about mocking herself in contrast to the imperturbable U.C.:

> He did not value cleanliness far above godliness like me, and wasn't reduced to despair by all the manifestations of disease. He saw the Chinese as people, while I saw them as a mass of downtrodden, valiant doomed humanity. Long ago ... U.C. declared as dogma, 'M loves humanity but can't stand people.'

In this mellow travel memoir, written when she was 70, Gellhorn was able to recapture the best of the past without bitterness or rancor.

Although Hemingway's overpowering presence has dogged Martha Gellhorn mercilessly since their divorce, and she has been pursued by scholars (and worse) eager to hear her gossipy recollections but indifferent to her own work, this humiliating situation has not for a minute reduced her to silence. For almost four decades she has remained "a tourist of wars" and a keenly observant and well-informed reporter (frequently for these pages) wherever her indefatigable curiosity propelled her. She has written with originality and sympathetic intelligence about Poland and Israel, Africa and Mexico, the United States and England. (She has divided her time for many years between a flat in London and a cottage in Wales; during the 1950s, she was briefly married in England to T. S. Matthews, another expatriate and a former managing editor of *Time*.)

In the collection *A View from the Ground* (1988), gathering five decades of peacetime reporting, the range of her eye and mind, not to mention her gutsy physical endurance, is extraordinary. To name only a few of the subjects, she covered the Army-McCarthy hearings, the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials, the Six-Day War, Spain after the death of Franco, Cuba under Castro, the Vietnam War and the women of Greenham Common. And if the voice of this passionately committed New Deal liberal, raging against injustice and the American involvement in Vietnam, has at times become politically shrill in recent years, one can't help responding to her irrepressible zest and confidence.

Gellhorn has always insisted, despite her reputation as a correspondent of war and peace, that her "real work," "my own work," was not journalism but fiction. But since her novels and stories "did not reap sheaves of gold ... I had to earn money; journalism paid for the time to write fiction." In the light of this ambition, Hemingway's vicious tirade, when she took off for the European war, must have cut cruelly deep: "I'll show you, you conceited bitch. They'll be reading my stuff long after the worms have finished with you." However much we recoil from the brutality of this outburst, it's undeniable, particularly on the evidence of the newly reprinted novellas, that there was an edge of truth to his words.

She may never have assumed that she was in his league as a novelist, but the fact remains that her journalism has had a freshness and power never attained by her fiction. Toward the end of the war she followed the 82nd Airborne into Germany, where she filed a story from Dachau that still has the wrenching immediacy of frontline journalism at its best. Compared with the Dachau episodes in *Point of No Return* (1948), Gellhorn's novel about the final weeks of European combat, the factual dispatch from the scene, terrifying in its brevity, is spare, understated, grimly unemphatic about atrocities "no one will believe." As she wrote in the dispatch to *Collier's*: "Behind the barbed wire and the electric fence, the skeletons sat in the sun and searched themselves for lice. They have no age and no faces.... They watched us but did not move; no expression shows on a face that is only a yellowish, stubbly skin stretched across bone." But in the novel the horrors of Dachau are refracted through a rather simple-minded Jewish soldier who until these dreadful revelations has cared nothing about his Jewishness. As he walks away, Jacob Levy broods about the camp: "They were people ... they lived somewhere. They were real people like anybody else. Like momma and poppa.... What gave [these Germans] a right to gang up and murder poor people who lived like everybody else and did no harm?" Stunned by what he has seen and heard in Dachau, he goes violently berserk on leaving the camp. The scene seems sentimental and contrived because the soldier has been conceived less as a credible human being than as a stereotype.

The novellas feel curiously stilted because Gellhorn is so intensely determined to make a large and telling point—about poverty during the Depression, about the treacherous shoals of marriage and adultery, about the relations of blacks and whites in postcolonial Africa—that the narratives become more didactic than evocative. As she criss-crossed the country for the FERA during

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the Depression, she was clearly so appalled and outraged by the dehumanizing hunger and misery of the people on relief (the handouts were pitifully inadequate), by the abuse of union organizers, that when she recycled her reports into the fiction of *The Trouble I've Seen* (1936), the characters acquired a spurious saintliness in the writer's eyes. Even the violently drunken husband in "Mrs. Maddison and Her Children" is made to appear blameless—he behaves badly because he cannot find work and is desperately poor. The only section of that early volume that comes intermittently to life is "Ruby," about an 11-year-old girl who becomes a prostitute so she can buy a yearned-for pair of roller skates. But the tear-jerking end is not persuasive.

Once her connection with the Master became part of the public domain, and long after they had parted, the reviewers of her books kept pressing the same tiresome button—"These stories are pure Hemingway—romantic under a surface of hardness"—without any critical discrimination, and that was surely hard for her to bear. But although much of her fiction was indeed romantic, it never had the stylistic purity, the taut economy of Hemingway's language in his best work. Gellhorn's slick explorations of modern marriage in the novellas of *Two by Two* (1958) move from a brittle account, in the manner of Evelyn Waugh, of heartless English aristocrats, to a maudlin tale about a weak man inextricably bound to a childlike invalid, to a fictionalized memoir about Gellhorn's friend Robert Capa, the *Life* photographer who was killed in Indochina in 1954. Though the prose is facile, the stories are mechanically worked out, and they convey nothing profound or moving about the vicissitudes of marriage. And the three novellas originally collected in *Pretty Tales for Tired People* (1965), which deal in various ways with the destructive effects of adultery, are so laboriously predictable that we can feel each climax coming long before it is reached. What these narratives lack most fatally is the vital element of surprise.

Gellhorn's last attempt to transfigure her globe-ranging experience into fiction was *The Weather in Africa* (1978), which consists of three novellas drawn from her sojourn on the dark continent, where she lived for at least part of each year from 1962 to 1975. More ambitious than her earlier work in this form, the African novellas are on the whole more substantial in character and setting. She was plainly not intimidated by the fact that Hemingway had years before staked his claim to Africa as literary territory. At once fascinated and repelled by the continent, she was dazzled by the panoramic immensity and beauty of the landscape but frustrated by the Africans' impenetrable strangeness. She was convinced, despite her obsessive fascination with the place, that "Africa remained out of reach," as she wrote in *Travels with Myself*, "except for moments of union, when walking on the long empty beach at sunrise or sunset, when watching the night sky." The longer she lived there, the less able she felt to unriddle "the mysteries of the African soul."

Perhaps for that reason, in this group of novellas she concentrated mainly on the whites: those who had been rooted in the land for so long that they stayed on after independence, or those who came as tourists. "On the Mountain" deals with an English couple who own a hotel on Mount Kilamanjaro (which is, of course, the setting for one of Hemingway's most famous stories). Their two children—plain Mary Ann, the good daughter, and beautiful Jane, selfish and racist—have just returned from long years abroad, and the parents assume they will take over the management of the hotel. But things go wrong when the bad daughter becomes infatuated with a handsome African bureaucrat, who enacts his vengeful hatred of the white race in his cruelty to Jane. It is the good daughter who fulfills the rich promise of Africa by her devotion to its flora and its natives. Though the descriptive passages are well wrought, Gellhorn encases the characters in her habitually didactic banality and deprives them of the complexity that might bring them to life.

In the longest of the African novellas, "In the Highlands," a young Englishman who has immigrated to Kenya to forget his long ordeal in a prisoner-of-war camp buys a squalidly neglected farm and proudly transforms it into a thriving enterprise where the blacks live and work in perfect harmony with their white employer. When he is tricked into marriage with an evil vixen, his rural idyll is almost destroyed until he figures out a cunning way to rid himself, his farm and Africa of her malign presence and can settle into prosperous contentment with his adopted black daughter. The demonic wife is one of a flock of predatory females who recurrently poison the air in Gellhorn's fiction: they are without exception nasty, mean-spirited, spiteful—and unbelievable.

In a curious way, Gellhorn as a novelist has reversed the way great writers work: they begin with the commonplaces of actuality, which are then enhanced and enriched by the inventive imagination. She could dramatize the immediacies of reality in her journalism, but her imagination diminished them in her fiction. While the men and women in her factual accounts, such as the report from Dachau, embody a complex and subtle reality, her fictional creatures, like the evil women, lack the credible solidity and nuance that distinguish her journalism.

Still, in the last of the African novellas, "By the Sea," Gellhorn did for once rise above this flaw. An English tourist, Mrs. Jamieson, has journeyed to Kenya to recover from a shattered marriage and the death of her young son. Perhaps because the story is told mainly in the first person by Mrs. Jamieson, her voice—throbbing with hysteria, panic and dread—has the ring of authenticity that would be lost by an omniscient narrator. We are thrown without warning into the thick of crisis because "one morning I decided to make a short trip to see some birds I'd heard about"—and her car runs down a small black child. Grieving in her hotel room, she is threatened by a servant who tries to blackmail her, and she plunges over the balcony to her death. For once Gellhorn here allows the events to speak for themselves, resisting the urge to nail down her meaning with the overemphatic clang of a slammed door.

Will this volume release Martha Gellhorn from the iron jaws of the Hemingway myth? Probably nothing could, certainly not a sampling of fiction that makes clear that the ambition of her reach as a novelist has sadly exceeded her grasp. Still, she is a formidable individual who can stand, unwavering, on her own feet. What remains interesting about Martha Gellhorn is her brilliantly adventurous life, her spirited and vivid personality, her superb journalism and her uncompromising independence, without the rubber stamp of feminist clichés.

PEARL K. BELL is a writer who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The Hunters

In the cold mist of a November
morning, pickups park deep
in fallen leaves while hunters
file singly into the woods,
looking for deer that browse
in abandoned apple orchards
by cellar holes. God watches
them move under hemlock and oak
like fleas in a dog's pelt,
so many of them, tiny among
the trees—but as the priest
and heretic of Gotha put it,
"It makes no difference, a
thousand angels or one:
There is no number in eternity."

DONALD HALL

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Siren of Vienna

BY KATHARINE WASHBURN

The Bride of the Wind:
The Life and Times of Alma Mahler-Werfel
by Susanne Keegan

(Viking, 346 pp., $25)

Franz Werfel: A Life in Prague, Vienna and Hollywood
by Peter Stephan Jungk
translated by Anselm Hollo

(Grove Weidenfeld, 318 pp., $24.95)

The title of this latest contribution to the books inspired not only by the romantic history of Alma Mahler, but by the "kindling fever," as Robert Musil called it, of Vienna in the early 1900s, is taken from a 1914 painting by Oscar Kokoschka. The canvas, which envisioned the painter and the widow of Gustav Mahler caught up in a passional storm, was christened the "Windsbraut." But instead of the nocturnal palette of expressionist portraiture, the title is likely to remind the reader of those illustrated, gilt-lettered covers on the drugstore rack: a woman with trailing hair locked in the embrace of a blond hero under the gaze of his dark rival, the swarthy suitor forbidden by convention, temperament and his dubious background, and therefore all the more desirable.

The lurid plot of the popular romance is not so distant, in fact, from the pattern of Alma Mahler's romantic and sexual life as explored in Susanne Keegan's friendly, fair-minded but not entirely unblinkered biography. *The Bride of the Wind* treads the biographer's catwalk between the revealed and the speculative, aware of Barthes's stricture that "biography is fiction that dare not tell its name," but informed by the sympathy and imagination that are the essential ingredients in its writing.

Alma's spouses and lovers have provided their own fare for a century-long biographical feast, including the recent, *Franz Werfel: A Life in Prague, Vienna and Hollywood.* In Peter Stephan Jungk's book, the life of a by now obscure literary figure, whose work is consigned to the ranks of the second-rate, is given the homage of a first-rate biography, one that salvages something of value from the tormented and divided life of Prague's Other Franz, Alma Mahler's last consort. His artistic failure, in Jungk's study of the man and his times, becomes more intriguing than many incandescent successes. Reading these two biographies side by side is suggestive: which, you might ask, is the truly failed talent, which figure the captive of celebrity at the cost of genuine achievement?

The Bride of the Wind is only one of a number of treatments of the life of Alma Schindler-Mahler-Gropius-Werfel in recent years, the fallout from an explosion of biographical interest that may have been refueled six years ago when those long lines were queuing up at MOMA to examine a cruet from the Werkstatte and inflate the price of a Klimt, a Schiele and a sketch for a Secessionist building. Paris as the seat, for Americans, of high modernism gave way, with a turn of the compass, to Vienna, the despised former capital of neurosis, mothballed splendor and kitsch. The society of Hapsburg Vienna during the last thirty years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which Musil called "Kakania" (the name is a compound of the seal of officialdom that embossed every document—Kaiserlich und Königlich—and a play on the universal nursery word for excrement), has been rediscovered in all its toxic glory, and with it, the minor personage of Alma Schindler, the feminine embodiment of its hard glittering certainties and its stubborn, unmanageable paradoxes.

She was born in the Austria of the Hapsburg Dual Monarchy in 1879, the musically gifted daughter of a landscape painter whose death, when she was 13, may have set in motion her long quest for the ideal male mentor of genius whose life was "consumed by art." Alma sought a heroic model to replace him, looking for his likeness in a sequence of husbands and lovers whose otherness made them all the more eligible as substitutes for the lost father in her childhood idyll (real or embellished): an exquisitely appointed manor house in the Vienna Woods where domestic life ran like clockwork, keeping pace with the reassuring creative hum from the artist's studio on the top floor. The Alma of the early photographs was beautiful, headstrong and equipped by her early talent as a composer and pianist to pursue her quarry in the artistic and cultural circles of fin-de-siècle Vienna. Her city was a place where every discipline, every art and every discourse—musical, philosophical, literary and decorative—connected not only with any other, but with the opulence, sensuality and decadence of a setting that Karl Kraus called "the testing lab at the end of the world."

Gustav Mahler, 41 years old at the time of his first meeting with Alma, was a Jewish convert to Catholicism whose appointment as artistic director of the Court Opera in Vienna flew in the face of what Keegan describes as a "particularly Viennese mixture of parochial jealousy, monetary envy and dislike of the unfamiliar." Alma Schindler shared the national taste for this particular brew of resentment, disdain and suspicion. Her lifelong anti-Semitism, even in the context that Keegan illuminates so scrupulously, was unyielding. Her response to the seeming contradiction of her relations with Alexander Zemlinsky, Arnold Schoenberg and Gustav Mahler, the first of her Jewish spouses, was that, in effect, she decided who was or was not Jewish, while allowing herself a generous ration of unpleasant asides about racial traits, racial mixtures and Jewish physiognomy. Her much-discussed role as femme fatale, the siren who ensorcelled so many famous and talented contemporaries, and the riddle, left unanswered by Keegan's conscientious book, of her erotic mystery take on an interesting dimension if we look at Alma as the keeper of the keys of assimilation. She becomes the chatelaine of the Austrian stronghold that grudgingly accepted her private sponsorship of "honorary gentiles."

The first marriage was problematic. Its milestones included Alma's renunciation of her own career as composer at Mahler's insistence, a pregnancy under way before the wedding ceremony, the death of an adored second daughter and, during the final stages of the conductor's transatlantic career, rising anxi-

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ety over his failing health. During one of the couple's periodic estrangements, in an episode steeped in the fumes of a Schnitzler story, Alma had an affair with Walter Gropius: a sojourn at a spa and a remedial course of hot baths, lettuce and buttermilk was capped by a fling with the 27-year-old Bauhaus architect. The distraught Mahler, having discovered their relationship through a misaddressed letter, consulted with Freud, who diagnosed Mahler's "mother-complex." The comic relief points to one of Alma's most notable talents: her unerring ability to locate the maternal fixation in her male partners, and perhaps, where her Jewish spouses were concerned, to draw on the abundant reservoir of self-hatred that was at its peak in the cosmopolitan metropolis of the Austrian capital.

Rapacious for adulation, flattery and the company of (male) genius, Alma nonetheless had remarkable gifts of her own. It is clear, as Keegan details here, that in musical matters she had an intuitive grasp of what mattered and had lasting worth. If the private life seems to organize itself into the stuff of which cabaret songs and limericks are made (There was a young girl from Vienna / Whose hair was the color of henna...), the tribute to her in the opening movement of Mahler's Sixth or "Tragic Symphony," in the expansive lyric second subject known as the "Alma" theme, becomes, in the coda, almost a triumphant statement. Keegan, by underlining those moments, and offering a careful summary of Alma's own musical production, convincingly suggests that there may be more to her than the role of the bad muse to famous men, a Chekhovian darling whose fickle and uncertain tastes altered with every partner. Against that possibility, we have to consider the testimony of Gustav Mahler, who died in 1911: if his last spoken word was "Mozart," his last written words, scribbled on the partial sketch of the Tenth Symphony, were, "To live for you, to die for you, Almschi."

Keegan proposes that after the catastrophe of Mahler's death, his 31-year-old widow enjoyed a brief interval of self-sufficiency, possibly even a resumption of her own work as composer. But this newborn Alma, beckoned by the more congenial strains of the Great Waltz of suitors, importunate lovers and geniuses ripe for collecting, seems not to have immersed herself in her own music for long. (In one of the stranger episodes of her period of mourning, Alma worked as a laboratory assistant to Paul Kammerer, the biologist of the "Midwife Toad" scandal. Her task, in one of those uncanny parallels that defies comment, involved experiments in his vivarium on the molting habits of the praying mantis, the genus notorious for the tendency of the female to fight and devour the male.)

Walter Gropius re-entered her life, while Oscar Kokoschka, who begged her to be his "second-born spiritual double," drew her into a tormented love affair that ended with the departure of a despairing Kokoschka for the trenches of World War I. Alma married Gropius and produced the perfect golden "Aryan" child, the daughter on whom her maternal passions, unshadowed by her fastidious notions of racial purity, settled until the death of Manon Gropius from poliomyelitis in 1935. Alma's role as distant mourner who failed to attend the funerals of her closest kin was already well under way; by the time of her last husband's death, she had buried a husband and three children, a figure of silent bereavement who explained her absence with the declaration: "I never go."

However short-lived the erotic experiment with the expressionist painter (whose only offspring was a life-sized doll, commissioned by the embittered Kokoschka and eventually carted off by the dustmen, having lost its head at a wild party in Munich in 1920), the wartime marriage to Gropius in 1915 was equally combustible. Alma had met Franz Werfel, eleven years her junior, a lyric poet with "a childlike expression," whom she later described as "a small hateful corpulent Jew," in the autumn of 1917. Born to secular Jewish parents in Prague in 1890, Werfel was a young litterateur who came out of a world of babblers, dreamers and idealists. He was part of the citizenry, above all, of the great Central European coffeehouse, a group whose bent for compulsive and heady speech may have been fueled by the intense anxiety surrounding its status as a despised Jewish minority in a hostile Bohemia. The author of a slight body of expressionist poetry of some precocity and accomplishment, he enjoyed an early fame that has dwindled into a quite perfunctory nod of acknowledgment at the portals of twentieth-century anthologies, overtaken by the great alchemists of modernism. Keegan tells us he was the last great passion of Alma's life. He was, at any rate, the longest, which allows the readers of both his biography and hers a larger frame for more objective scrutiny.

Where Suzanne Keegan is a thoughtful chronicler of Alma Mahler-Werfel's last marriage, knowledgeable about the infantile bond between the young poet and the artist's widow, Jungk proves to be a more hostile witness to their story. Both biographers seem to agree that Alma's transformation of Franz Werfel from middling expressionist poet to commercially successful writer of novels was no great loss to the estate of poetry. A literary historian, quoted by Jungk, remarked that "he was an infinitely greater talent than Musil, but Musil is the infinitely more interesting writer." Here we have the paradox of natural talent in one writer, Werfel, in opposition to the sheer force of original intellect in a writer like Musil, whose reputation is likely to outlive Werfel's.

Keegan, Jungk and the verdict of time absolve Alma from the purely mercenary motive and focus attention on her shrewdness in enhancing the art of the possible. Economical Viennese Housefrau of the Arts, perhaps the daughter of Emil Schindler knew that the best is sometimes the enemy of the good. But in Jungk's account, we are told that Werfel's wedding vows included an explicit promise to renounce his Jewishness, along with the implicit pledge to abandon poetry for the rewards of fiction and drama. This is consistent with Alma's later return to the Roman Catholic religion, which Keegan notes, but the sorry complicity of Werfel in the signing of a declaration of loyalty to Hitler is a troubling omission. We don't know Alma's precise role in this incident, but given the tenor of her pro-Nazi apologetics (unabashedly displayed in the émigré salons of Southern California and carefully transcribed by Keegan), we have to assume that Werfel's wife was no passive observer of a gesture that failed to save his skin. His books joined the general bonfire of the unacceptable and the decadent, he was expelled from the Prussian Academy and Alma and Franz began their trek on the refugee's road. Before they left Vienna the Werfels threw a last, emblematic party. Their guest list included the stars of the Burgtheater, Bruno Walter, Carl Zuckmayer and Hitler's ambassador to Austria. On the flight over the Pyrenees to Lisbon and America, the 61-year-old Alma climbed the mountain road to the border post, carrying a rucksack stuffed with money, jewelry and the scores of all of Mahler's symphonies.

The exiles settled among their fellows in Los Angeles, where Alma, whose English was always marginal, reassembled once more the perfect artist's lodging, the replica of the lost house outside the Vienna Woods—this time in a Beverly Hills bungalow. While Werfel wrote his phenomenally successful *Song of Bernadette*, as an authentic act of homage to the forced pilgrimage to Lourdes in the summer of '41, Alma, who had long ceased to write music altogether, dis-

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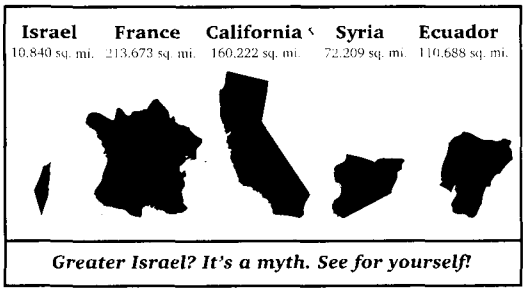
In May of 1989, James Baker, declared in an address to AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) that the Jewish state should once and for all forget about "the dream of a greater Israel". It was the first time that this phrase had been heard from the lips of a Western statesman. What does it mean? Does it have any relation to reality?

What are the facts?

Stripes on the flag. Arab propaganda has it that the two stripes on the flag of Israel, above and below the star of David, represent the Nile and the Euphrates River, respectively, and signify Israel's expansionist desire to form an empire that would supposedly reach from Cairo to Baghdad. But that has no basis in fact, of course. Nowhere in any documents of the Jewish state, in any statement by even the most "radical" spokesman can any reference to anything like that be found.

Israel's Borders. "Palestine", part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I, came under British mandate after that war. The Golan Heights were part of Palestine. Israel's current borders are the result of the 1948 War of Independence, in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six-Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Samaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Samaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reasons, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Samaria and of the Golan Heights.



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether former Secretary of State Baker was aware of it when he uttered his memorable phrase of "Greater Israel". A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank", the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen times as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernadino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab countries in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States.

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel", lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

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pensed her own very particular brew of hospitality, anti-Semitic vitriol and enchantment. Covering the last years of the Werfel/Alma ménage in which Alma devotedly tended an ailing Werfel and drank formidable amounts of Benedictine, Keegan gives only the most discreet hint of the complicated bond between these unlikely partners. She sorts out the strands of affection, abuse and dependency, and something emerges of Werfel's belief in a "sibylline core." Long before, in 1918, he wrote of his attraction to her "blond magic that contains much will to destroy, much urge to subjugate."

For a self-hating Jew from Prague and Vienna, Alma, with her infuriating prattle, at the height of the war, about the superior conditions in the concentration camps and "the triumph of the blond beast," may have provided a precisely measured dose of love and loathing, a peculiarly Wagnerian and addictive tonic. In any event, Alma continued to press for Werfel's "assimilation" into the gentile order even after his death in 1945. Although devastated by his loss, she revised his funeral oration by a Roman Catholic monsignor to include a statement of the Church's teaching on the "baptism of desire," with the strong suggestion that this was the true status of the unconverted Werfel, and she obtained the blessing of an archbishop, by special permission, on his remains. As with Werfel's conversion from poetry to potboilers, Jungk treats the issue as a conundrum, another puzzling element in a life that may have tried to reconcile too many burdensome opposites, too riddling in their perplexity for even so able a biographer to unravel to the end.

The final years of Alma's life contract into a single chapter: Alma as grande dame. Leaving Los Angeles for New York, she assumed the familiar responsibilities of artist's widow, occupied herself with lawsuits pertaining to her Viennese property and slipped further into an alcohol-swollen blowsiness. She wrote a memoir—*And the Bridge Is Love*—of which Keegan has made judicious use, and exercised until the end of her days a power of seduction that reaches beyond the grave, touching even the gentle detachment of *The Bride of the Wind.* Alma herself may have accomplished little, but in an age of brilliant invention that seems to have thrived without official subsidies, she stimulated, patronized, enabled and reigned even in exile, Kakania's last, enigmatic and perhaps most bountiful queen.

KATHARINE WASHBURN, a critic and the translator of Paul Celan's *Last Poems* (North Point), is editing an anthology of poetry in translation.

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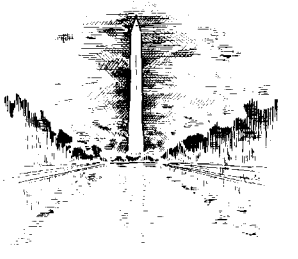
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Name games

THE FIRST THING TO CATCH THE eye at the reunion of Rhodes scholars in Washington this past weekend was the large orange sign outside the cafeteria. As the 800 or so scholars lined up to collect scrambled eggs, they passed the bold-type question: **WHO ARE YOU?** Then in smaller type: *we can't tell you that but we can help you tell others who you are*. The ensuing advertisement for business cards was probably futile. Selling self-promotion to a reunion of Rhodes scholars is a little like selling bicycles on the side of the speedway during the Indianapolis 500. But it raised a useful existential question. The scholars in line for the eggs wore large, plastic name tags slipped over their necks like a two-way bib, enabling them to be identified not only from their chests but from their backs. It was tempting to attribute these unusual devices to a heightened fear of being forgotten, as the fear surely exists. Rhodes scholars carry with them the terrible burden of early promise coupled with the constant temptation not to fulfill it. For a couple of years they exist in a blissful state of pure possibility, after which they must contend with the ease with which they are admitted to corporate law, management consulting and other occupations that end in the need for large name tags.

BUT A MORE PLAUSIBLE EXPLANAtion for the sandwich board name tags was the Rhodes taboo against forgetting a name. (Recall Clinton's habit at Oxford of filling out note cards in the evenings with relevant data on the people he had met that day.) And the trouble with ordinary name tags is that it's hard to read them without getting caught, especially if you make a practice of looking people in the eye—a poor way to converse but a good way to convey character. The Rhodes reunion committee's solution of plastering name tags onto people's backs was clever but imperfect: I observed one pair of scholars pass each other, eye fixed on eye as they nodded and greeted, then swing around simultaneously to read each other's backs, like sneaky gunfighters. At that moment two careers may have gone badly off track. More effective in my opinion would have been to paste a sticker bearing each Rhodes scholar's name between his eyes. Once people grew accustomed to the innovation, and as the technology became available, the stickers might be replaced with tiny teleprompters that could flash not only names but also curriculum vitae.

FOR MEMBERS OF THE PRESS THE reunion consisted of a series of short speeches by Rhodes scholars that shared—with an exception or two—the presumption among their peers of a fondness for Great Britain. There were many Shavian witticisms and jokes about Balliol architecture. This suggests that the Rhodes continues to fulfill its original purpose as British imperial propaganda; but I wonder. For an article I once wrote about American Anglophobia I interviewed a handful of Rhodes scholars who simmered as they recalled how badly they were mistreated by Oxford undergraduates. Before he became George Stephanopoulos, for example, George Stephanopoulos told me that as a Rhodes scholar he had learned to loathe England and its privileged class. The ridicule to which Americans are subjected, he said, "forces you to choose. Either you are American or you turn your back on America." He described a skit put on by the English students in which an American Rhodes scholar appeared wearing a football jersey and wandered around the stage saying, "Hi There! Hi There! Hi There!" "We had a saying for how the English behaved when they passed you on the street," he recalled. "We called it 'bird in the tree,' because the moment the English spotted you coming they would suddenly turn their attention to a bird in a tree."



A FEW DAYS AFTER THE RHODES REunion, I leapt from the world of self-promotion to the realm of calculated self-effacement. Climbing over the low fence on the south end of Rock Creek Cemetery in Northwest Washington, I set off in search of the unmarked memorial erected by Henry Adams to his wife, Marion Hooper Adams, after her suicide. My quest was part of my growing obsession with the author of *The Education*, in which the memorial is described. The discomfort I felt as I wandered through the rows of mausoleums and forests of obelisks resembled that of the average American culture climber making his first ascent of the *Mona Lisa*. I feared I might walk right past the shrine untouched and unmoved, and thus fail in my bid to gain entry to the cult of Adams. The scorn heaped by Adams upon those unable to generate the appropriate sentiment toward his memorial—he had a special talent for tormenting philistines—renders the visit an especially delicate rite of passage. "I am astounded at the actually torpid perceptions of the average American," he wrote characteristically in a letter to Elizabeth Cameron thirteen years after the completion of the memorial, "and the worst of all is the clerical preacher. He can see nothing but Despair. He shows what his own mind is full of."

PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE METROPOLItan Museum of Art's book on the grave, *Memorial to A Marriage*, depict a grove of holly trees housing a marble hexagon. A speckled black and beige marble bench angles around three of the six sides of the grave and faces the mysterious hooded bronze figure by Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Beneath the pink and white gravel in the heart of the hexagon lie buried Adams and his wife. The grave is unmarked; the sculpture unsigned and untitled. Not long before his death Adams wrote to the sculptor's son to preserve the conceit of anonymity: "Do not tag my figure with a name! Every magazine writer wants to label it as some American patent medicine for popular consumption—Grief, Despair, Pear's Soap, or Macy's Men's Suits Made to Measure. Your father meant it to ask a question, not to give an answer; and the man who answers will be damned to eternity like the men who answered the Sphinx."

AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, THE holly trees have been chopped and so the memorial itself looked nothing like either its photographs or Adams's descriptions of it. A great tragedy on the one hand; on the other, a relief, affording the borderline philistine an excuse for failing to recognize the place until a grave digger pointed it out, as well as an opportunity for Adamsian aesthetic indignation. The management of the cemetery said that the grave was administered from Boston by the Adams Memorial Society, which was, appropriately, unlisted. Upon finally reaching Charles Adams, the great nephew of Henry, I learned that the holly trees had been cleared because the lower limbs were intruding on the neighboring graves; the roots had swelled to the point of levering the marble bench out of the ground; and the superintendent of the cemetery felt that the enclosure was a security risk. Now there will be only Brigadoonish moments when the trees are full and lush enough to suggest the space imagined by Henry Adams but not so full and lush as to shelter criminals. Thus are the best laid plans of even a master of assertive stealth foiled.

MICHAEL LEWIS

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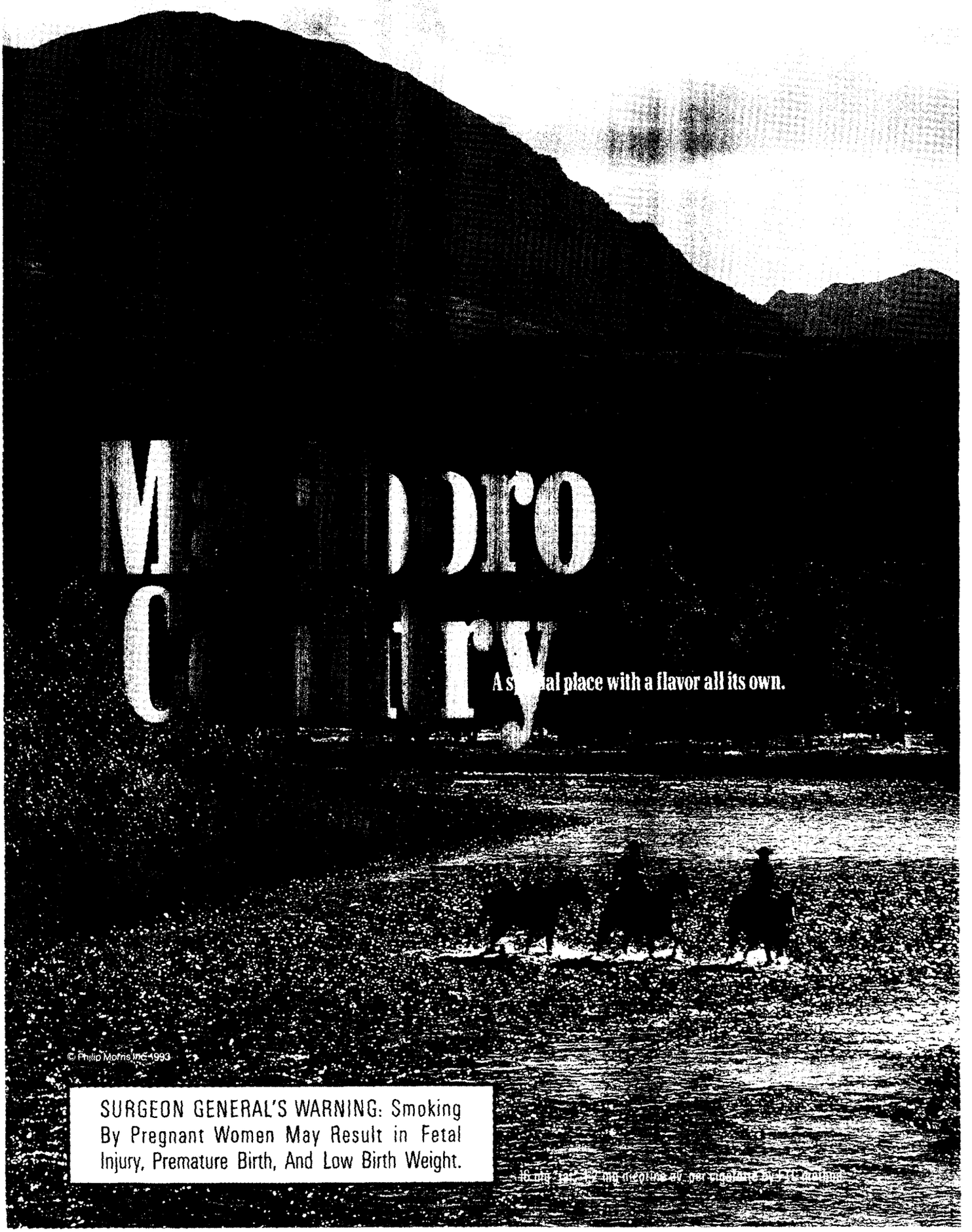
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